

America and the World: A Diplomatic History

Parts I & II

Professor Mark A. Stoler



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America and the World: A Diplomatic History

Scope:

Today, the United States ranks as the most powerful and influential nation not only in the contemporary world but in all of world history. In both relative and absolute terms, its power and influence are totally unprecedented. Not since the heyday of the Roman Empire has any single nation even approached such an extraordinary position.

That was not always the case. Indeed, in 1776, the United States consisted of 13 weak and sparsely settled colonies that appeared utterly incapable even of maintaining their just-declared independence, let alone achieving great-power status. Even after they succeeded in obtaining British recognition of their independence, the states still constituted one of the weakest countries in the world—one that barely survived on the periphery of international politics.

How, then, did the United States shift from such weakness and peripheral status to its current position of unprecedented global power and influence? This course explores how and why the nation was able to do so between 1776 and 1991 by examining some of the key events, ideas, and personalities in the history of U.S. foreign relations.

We will first examine the colonial and revolutionary origins of the key beliefs that Americans developed, many of which they still hold today, about international relations and their role in the world. We will also look at how they managed to defeat Great Britain, the greatest empire in the world at that time, and how they managed to defend their independence from 1783–1815 against a still-hostile Britain, as well as a host of other hostile powers. In the process, we will explore the Constitution as a foreign policy document and the domestic debate in the late 18th and early 19th centuries between the followers of Thomas Jefferson and those of Alexander Hamilton regarding the proper foreign policy for the young nation to pursue. Within that debate, you will be introduced to some of the key documents and events in the early history of American foreign relations: Jay's Treaty, Washington's Farewell Address, the XYZ Affair and the Quasi War with France, the Louisiana Purchase, and the War of 1812.

With the end of that war in 1814–1815, the United States was able to turn its attention away from Europe and toward continued westward expansion across the North American continent. The next section of the course will explore this process, with special emphasis on the expansionist ideology known as Manifest Destiny; key policymakers, such as John Quincy Adams and James K. Polk; and such pivotal documents and events as the 1819 Transcontinental Treaty, the Monroe Doctrine, the war with Mexico, and the acquisition of Texas, California, New Mexico, and Oregon. By 1848, the United States had, as a result of these acquisitions, become one of the largest countries in the world, stretching across the entire North American continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific. This enormous expansion dramatically exacerbated sectional tensions, however, leading to a temporary end to further territorial expansion and to a civil war that almost destroyed the nation between 1861 and 1865. The failure of Europe to intervene on the side of the South was pivotal to Union victory and the continued rise of American power, and it is analyzed in the concluding lecture to this section of the course.

The next section explores the full emergence of the United States as one of the world's great powers that occurred in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The major source for this new status was the Industrial Revolution that, by the 1890s, had transformed the United States into the greatest economic power in the world. Along with that economic power came a war with Spain in 1898 and a new burst of territorial expansion, this time, primarily through the acquisition of overseas colonies in the Caribbean and the Pacific rather than contiguous land in North America. Simultaneously, the United States used its enormous economic power to create an informal empire in Latin America.

From 1914–1918 and again from 1939–1945, Europe plunged into two world wars. Despite a stated desire to refrain from participation in either war and, thus, retain its isolationist tradition vis-à-vis Europe, the United States wound up as an active participant in both conflicts. This section of the course explores how and why the United States entered each world war and its role in each Allied victory. It also explores Washington's subsequent emergence, by 1945, as the world's greatest diplomatic, military, and economic power, with commentators referring to the country as a superpower.

The United States was not, however, the only superpower in the world in 1945. Its Russian ally had also emerged from World War II with enormously expanded power and influence, and within a short period of time, the two nations shifted from wartime allies to global adversaries. Indeed, from 1945 to 1991, they waged a global Cold War that consistently threatened to turn into a third world war. It did not do so, though the United States did fight two limited but bloody wars in the context of the Cold War, one in Korea and the other in Vietnam. This last section of the course examines these specific wars, as well as the overarching Cold War and the eventual American victory in that conflict.

Victory in the Cold War removed what appeared to be the only remaining threat to American global hegemony. Indeed, by 1991, the United States had defeated not only every nation that had threatened its global dominance but, in the process, every competing ideology: first, monarchism; then, fascism/Nazism; and finally, Communism. Some commentators consequently spoke of an "end of history" in an ideological sense, with American democratic capitalism in the form of globalization sweeping the world. But then came 9/11 and the global conflict that we live with today.

As we will see at the end of the course, the roots of this conflict may be traced to our own arrogance, and perhaps one of the lessons we can learn from it is to seek, in the words of Reinhold Niebuhr, “the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference.”

Lecture One

Achieving Independence

Scope: Isolationism, mission, expansionism, idealism, and realism are but a few of the many terms used to describe the central themes in the history of U.S. foreign relations. This lecture explores the origins of these themes in early American history and their importance in America's eventual rise to superpower status. It also examines their apparent contradictions, especially as they emerged during the Revolutionary War.

Most notable in this regard was the conflict between the republican ideology Americans espoused and the realities they faced in achieving independence from Great Britain. The former placed them at odds with every monarchy in Europe, whereas the latter required alliance with, and military assistance from, those very monarchies, particularly the French, whom they had fought against in numerous wars throughout the century. This lecture examines how and why the Americans were able to obtain French assistance and the resulting shift of the Revolutionary War to a world war that forced the British to accept American independence. In the process, we will explore the dichotomy between idealistic statements by the American revolutionaries and their very realistic diplomacy within the European monarchical system.

Outline

- I. This course explores how and why the United States transformed itself from an initial position of weakness to its current status as a superpower. Our primary approach will be a chronological examination of key events, ideas, and personalities in the history of U.S. foreign relations. We begin by going back to 1776 and even earlier to explore the origins of some of the major beliefs and themes that will reappear throughout the course.
- II. In the process of declaring their independence in 1776, Americans enunciated a series of beliefs about international relations and their place in the world. These beliefs would become central themes in the rise to superpower status.
 - A. Some of these beliefs constitute what historians label the “idealistic” strand in American foreign relations. The basic concepts in this strand are as follows:
 1. America was both geographically and ideologically distinct from Europe, its monarchical system of government, and its ensuing wars.
 2. America could and should maintain a policy of isolationism vis-à-vis those European wars and should be able to use trade as means of detaching itself from European conflict.
 3. Simultaneously, America was to be the global haven of liberty, with a mission to spread such liberty to Europe and, thus, to help overthrow the monarchical system that tyrannized the peoples of Europe and caused widespread war.
 4. Americans were also destined to expand across the North American continent and establish what Thomas Jefferson would later call “an empire of liberty.”
 - B. All these ideas originated long before 1776 and had deep roots in both European and American colonial history.
 1. Isolationism and geographic distinction are both part of the same concept that Europeans had long accepted: the idea that the Western Hemisphere constituted a separate world and that war or peace in one world did not necessarily mean war or peace in the other.
 2. The movement from England to North America was itself an act of isolationism. Many colonists desired to escape the problems of the Old World and start fresh in the New World.
 3. The unique American “mission” similarly has its origins in early colonial history. The early Puritans left England for Massachusetts Bay to escape problems in England, notably religious persecution, and establish a model Christian community to reform the corrupt Church of England.
 4. The very act of colonizing the New World was a form of imperial expansion, supported by the English government as a way of expanding the British Empire.
 - C. In 1776, these ideas were restated in new form, most clearly by Thomas Paine (1737–1809) in his famous pamphlet *Common Sense*.
 1. But to defeat Great Britain, Americans would need recognition and military assistance from the very European monarchies they wished to destroy, particularly the French, with whom they had fought four bloody wars since 1689.
 2. To obtain that help, American leaders relied on a tradition of realism far divorced from the idealistic statements in *Common Sense*.
 - D. That realistic tradition also had deep roots in colonial history. For nearly two centuries, the colonists had been part of the European system of alliances, wars, and empires and had, thus, learned the rules of mercantilism and realpolitik that European nations practiced. The most important of these rules revolved around three core principles:

1. The best way to obtain, maintain, and organize national wealth is to create a self-sufficient empire and a favorable balance of trade with other empires.
2. In a capitalist system, wealth can create wealth, which means that wealth is essentially infinite. In a mercantile system, however, the wealth of the world is finite. The only way to gain wealth is to take it away from another nation, usually by war, or else it will be taken from one's own nation.
3. All other nations are, therefore, potential threats. The core principle to keep in mind is that the present enemy of our present enemy is our temporary friend and ally.

III. These beliefs firmly guided American leaders during the War for Independence and established a tradition of realism in foreign policy to balance the idealism being simultaneously expressed.

- A.** America's first great successes in foreign policy came in 1778 with the Treaty of Commerce and the Treaty of Alliance with France. Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) and his colleagues negotiated these agreements with the French foreign minister, Charles Gravier, comte de Vergennes, after the great American military victory at Saratoga.
 1. French military assistance proved critical to the American war effort, especially at the decisive Yorktown campaign.
 2. French diplomacy brought Spain and other European nations into the conflict as either allies of France or friendly neutrals, though not as formal allies of the United States.
- B.** As a result, Britain found itself in a world war and diplomatically isolated by 1781. After Yorktown, the English decided to make peace with the Americans as a means of dividing their enemies and minimizing their losses.
- C.** In the ensuing peace negotiations, the Americans once again practiced *realpolitik*, violating the spirit if not the letter of the French alliance by conducting separate negotiations with, and obtaining highly favorable terms from, the British.
- D.** Yet in their ensuing euphoria, Americans tended to ignore these facts and see their success in idealistic terms, as divinely inspired and destined to result in the remaking of the entire world. Such beliefs would have a major impact on the future behavior of Americans.

Suggested Readings:

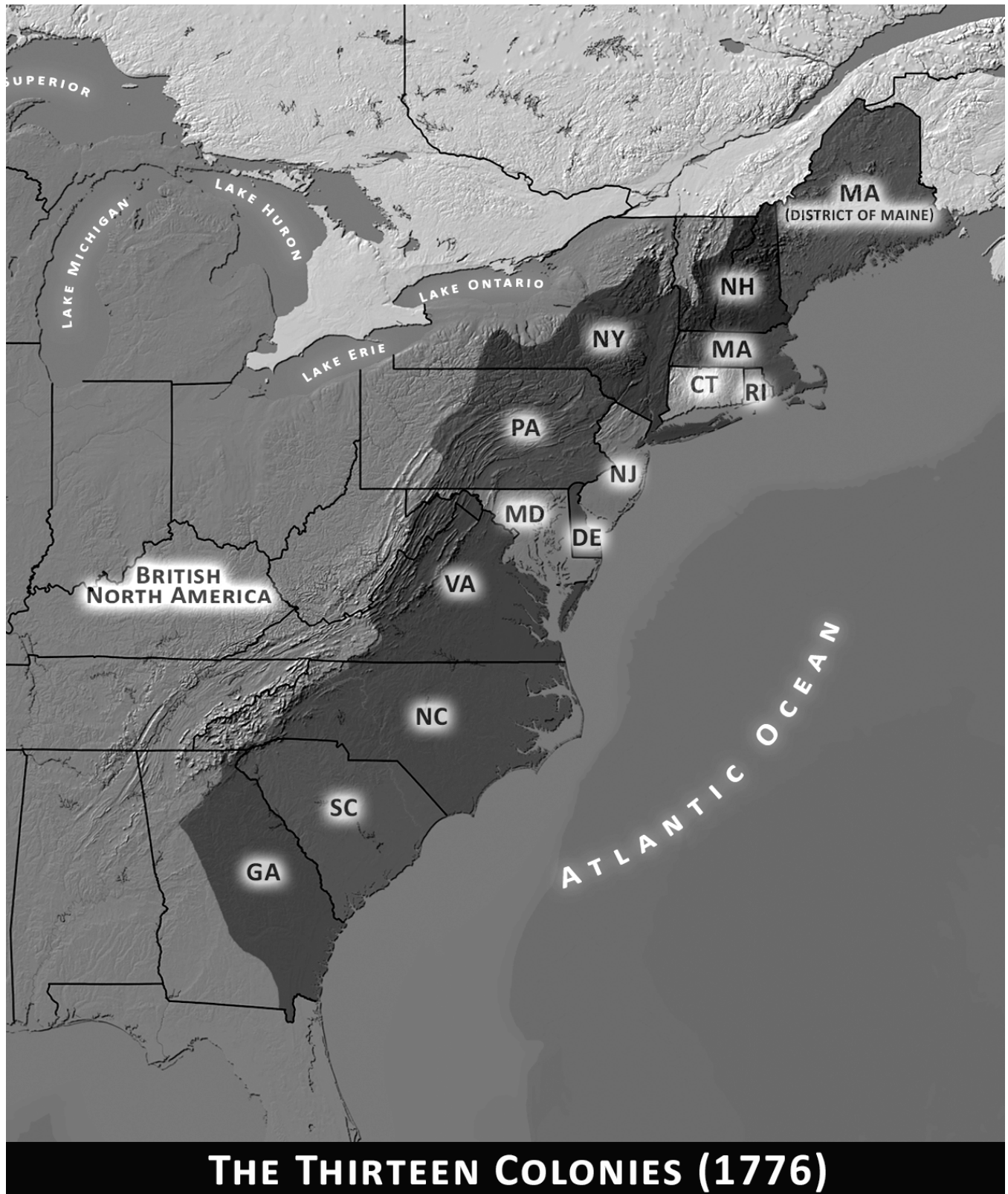
Dull, *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution*.

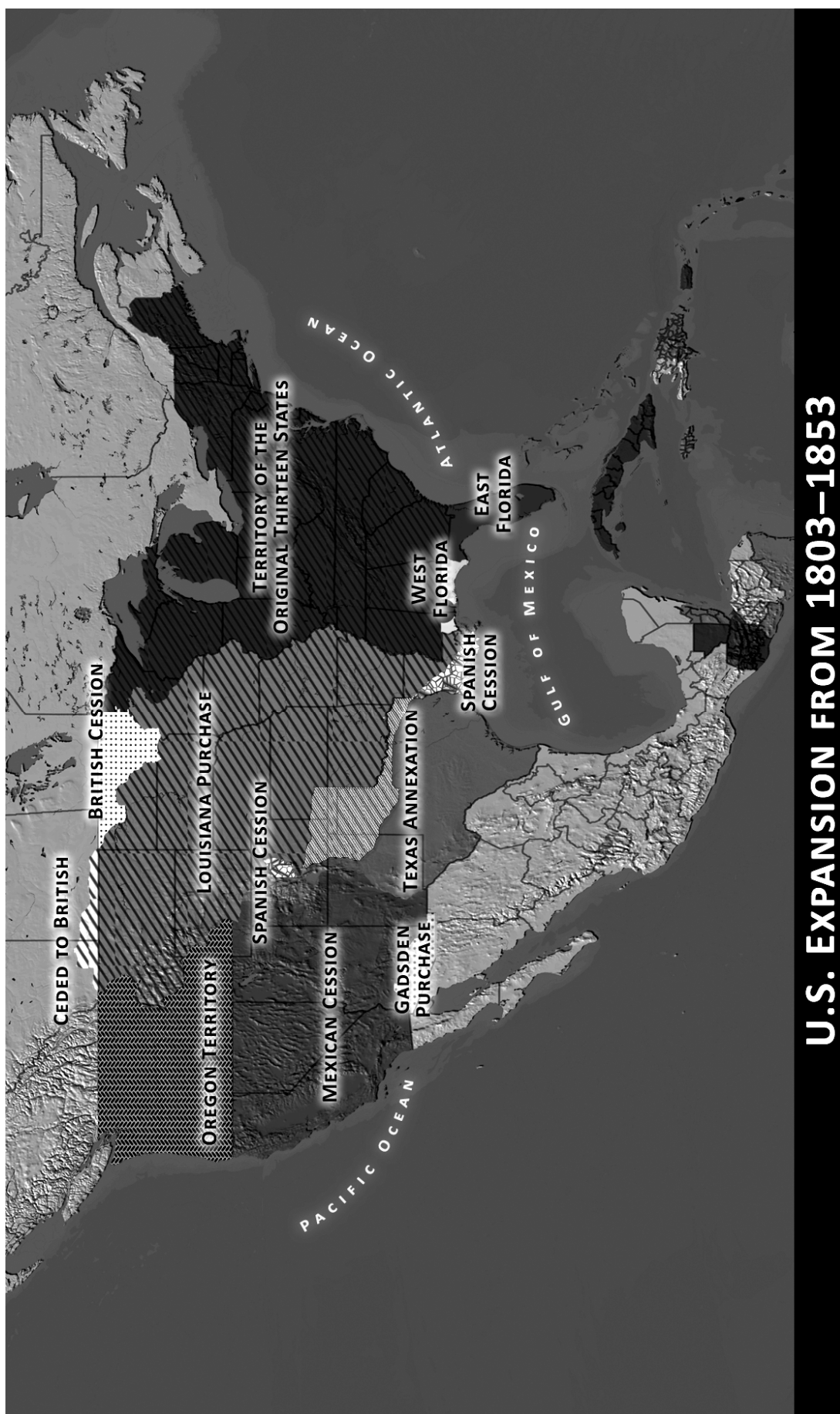
Gilbert, *To the Farewell Address*, chs. 1–4.

Saville with Fisher, *The Origins of American Diplomacy*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How and why did 17th- and 18th-century Americans develop a unique view of themselves and their place in international relations?
2. What diplomatic and military factors accounted for American success in the War for Independence?





Lecture Two

Confederation and the Constitution

Scope: Throughout the immediate postwar years, the United States existed not as a unified entity but as 13 sovereign and weak states held together in a loose confederation and facing numerous threats to their existence. This lecture analyzes those threats and how they led to the writing and ratification of the Constitution to replace the Articles of Confederation, thereby establishing a new and much stronger form of government capable of conducting a vigorous foreign policy. We will also explore key foreign policy provisions of the Constitution.

Outline

- I. Throughout the 1780s, the United States existed not as a single national entity but as 13 largely autonomous states held together in a loose confederation under a frame of government known as the Articles of Confederation. Though 19th-century historians considered the Confederation a failure, 20th-century scholars have rediscovered its numerous successes.
 - A. The underappreciated successes of the Confederation government included the 1783 peace treaty that successfully ended the War for Independence; the opening of trade with new areas, such as China; treaties with numerous European nations and Native American tribes; and the Northwest Ordinances.
 1. The Northwest Ordinances became a model for the future territorial expansion of the United States without fear of revolt by colonists, similar to the American revolt against British rule.
 2. The ordinances provided for the creation of states once a certain population had been achieved and their incorporation into the Confederation on a basis of full political equality.
 - B. But the Confederation also faced numerous and serious foreign policy problems.
 1. With no authority to tax, the Confederation had no power to raise or maintain a national army.
 2. Such an army was needed to enforce treaties that had been signed with the Native American tribes on the frontier and to defend the frontier against the British in the Northwest and the Spanish in the Southwest.
 3. In the Northwest, the British refused to evacuate eight forts despite their pledge to do so in the 1783 peace treaty. From those posts, the British supported Native American tribes resisting American settlers.
 4. In the Southwest, Spain similarly supported Native American resistance to settlement. Spain also refused to recognize the boundary between the United States and Florida, established in the 1783 peace treaty, and denied the United States both navigation rights on the Mississippi River and the crucial “right of deposit” at the port of New Orleans.
 5. Overseas trade also suffered as a result of attacks by the Barbary States of North Africa and London’s refusal to grant Americans trading privileges within the mercantilist British Empire, of which they were no longer a part.
 - C. These foreign policy problems were interwoven with domestic problems of the Confederation.
 1. Most states saw conflict between easterners and westerners, with westerners complaining that their interests were not being protected and that they were open to secessionist threats, which were, in turn, encouraged by the Spanish in the Southwest.
 2. The Confederation was also weakened by a split between northern states, primarily interested in protection and expansion of overseas commerce, and southern states, primarily interested in protection and expansion of western land.
 - D. All these issues came together in the statehood bids of Kentucky and Vermont, the Jay-Gardoqui affair of 1785–1786, and the more famous Shays’s Rebellion of 1786.
 - E. The result was a growing apprehension that the Confederation would soon break up, leaving the 13 states weak and divided, much as Europe was, or else that the states would be strangled and devoured by Britain and Spain.
- II. Such politicians as James Madison (1751–1836), who had always favored a stronger central government, argued that these problems resulted from the weaknesses of the Confederation and that the entire American experiment in representative government was consequently threatened.
 - A. Those in favor of strong central control organized a meeting of state representatives in Philadelphia in 1787 to strengthen the Confederation government.
 - B. Instead of amending the Articles of Confederation to strengthen that government, the representatives in Philadelphia decided to write a constitution that would create an entirely new form of government, the one under which we live today.
 - C. All agreed on the need to expand the power of the national government in four areas directly related to foreign affairs: taxation, establishment of a military, regulation of foreign commerce, and treaty enforcement.

- D. Problems emerged as a result of the existing split between the northern and southern states, as well as the fear that too much centralized power would destroy liberty and lead to a new tyranny.
 - E. The North-South differences were resolved in a series of compromises on commercial legislation, export and import taxes, votes on treaties, and a 20-year protection for the slave trade.
 - F. The fear of too much centralized power was dealt with through the checks and balances within the new federal system established by the Constitution.
 - 1. That document established a single executive with authority in foreign and military affairs, but that authority had to be shared with the legislative branch via the “separation of powers.”
 - 2. Furthermore, powers not granted to the new national government were to be reserved for the states via the “division of powers,” thereby creating a federated system of representative government instead of the confederation that had previously existed.
- III. In the process of structuring the new government, the writers of the Constitution stood established political theory on its head and created the foundation for an expanding empire based on liberty.
- A. Established political theory held that representative government worked best for small states, while large ones required more centralized power in the form of a monarchy.
 - B. James Madison, the primary author of the Constitution, argued that representative government would work better in a large and expanding nation than in a small one and that liberty could, thereby, be reconciled with great-power status.
 - C. Madison’s argument became a core belief in America’s rise to superpower status, while his document, the Constitution, became the means to that rise through its creation of a new national government with a strong executive able to exercise power in the international arena.

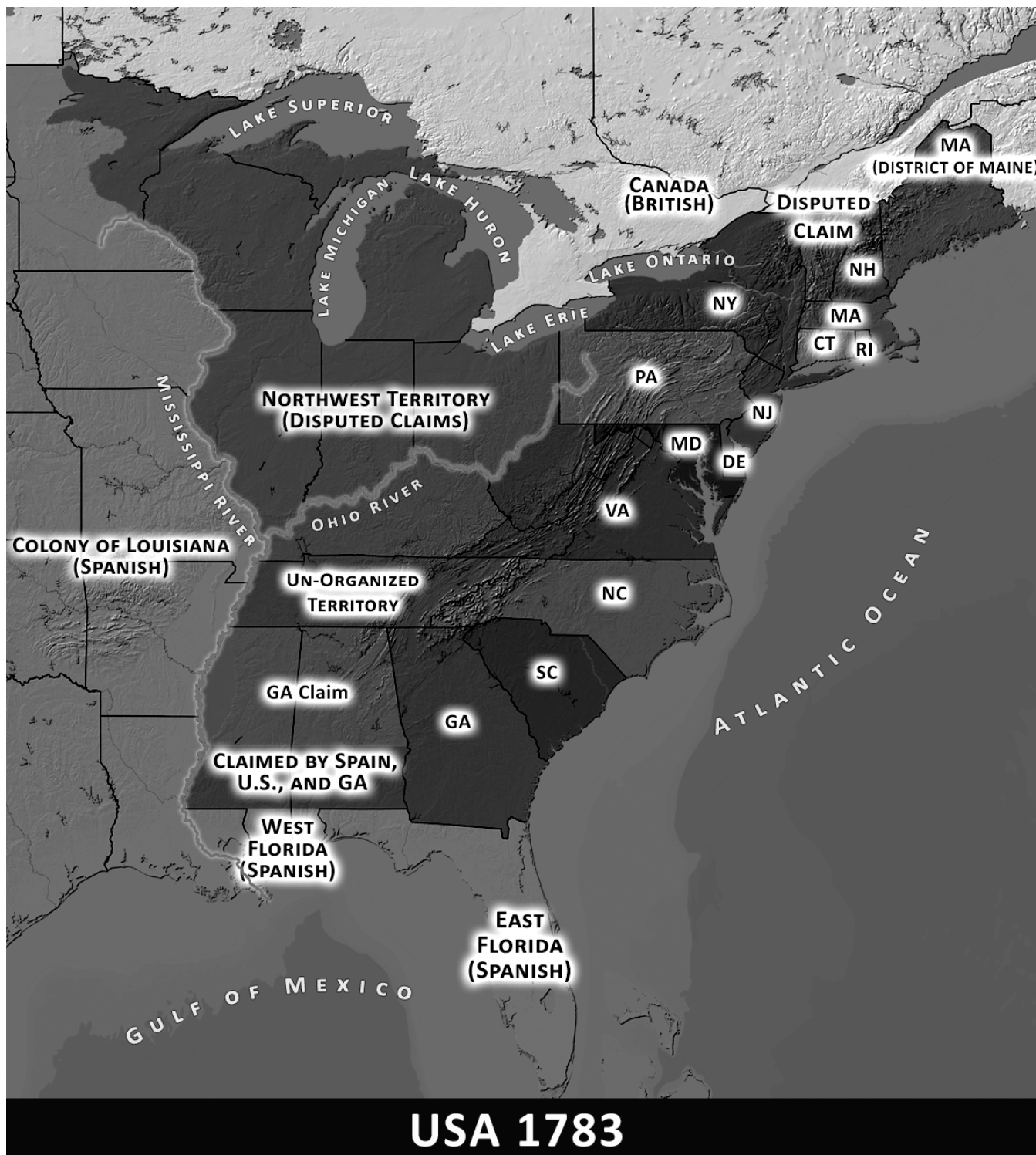
Suggested Readings:

Marks, *Independence on Trial*.

Morris, *The Forging of the Union*.

Questions to Consider:

- 1. Did the problems experienced under the Articles of Confederation truly result in a “critical” period in U.S. history, as early historians maintained, or have these problems been overstated?
- 2. What led writers of the Constitution to believe that their document could resolve the problems of the Confederation period without destroying liberty at home?



Lecture Three

The Great Debate—Jefferson versus Hamilton

Scope: George Washington's presidency witnessed a series of foreign policy crises, stemming from the French Revolution and the resulting war in Europe, that split his key advisers and eventually led to the formation of two national political parties: the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans. This lecture explores those crises and the very different policies to deal with them proposed by Washington's two key cabinet officers: Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton and Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. So polarized were those policies as to constitute one of the most fundamental disagreements in the history of the nation—and one of the most dangerous. Indeed, they resulted in fierce partisan battles that threatened to rip the country apart, and they prompted Washington's famous Farewell Address, one of the most misunderstood documents and warnings in American history.

Outline

- I. The establishment of the new national government under George Washington (1732–1799) in the 1790s would coincide with the French Revolution and the outbreak of a new war in Europe.
 - A. These events led to a massive and fundamental debate within Washington's cabinet and throughout the country over the proper foreign policy for the United States to pursue.
 - B. Within the cabinet, this debate pitted Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton (1755–1804) against Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826).
 - C. By the end of Washington's presidency, it had resulted in the division of the Founders and the country as a whole into two national political parties.
 - D. This dispute also constituted one of the most fundamental and dangerous disagreements in American history.
- II. Understanding this conflict requires an analysis of the competing visions Hamilton and Jefferson held of what the United States could and should be.
 - A. Hamilton believed that the United States could, in time, become the dominant power in the Western Hemisphere, but at the moment, the country was weak. Consequently, the immediate tasks were to stay out of the European war and build up American power and influence.
 1. Achieving these goals would involve building up the power of the central government by paying off U.S. debts while fostering commerce and industry.
 2. To accomplish this, Hamilton proposed funding the national debt at par value, assuming the state debts, and establishing internal and external taxes, as well as a national bank.
 3. Close relations with Great Britain were crucial to this plan because the United States critically needed British capital, manufacturers, and trade for the plan to work.
 4. Furthermore, Hamilton argued, Britain was the only country that could seriously hurt the United States. Consequently, the United States should unofficially align with the British.
 5. Hamilton was quite conservative ideologically and deeply distrusted the radical doctrines of the French Revolution. But he developed and promoted his policies before that revolution turned radical in 1793 and led to war between republican France and the monarchs of Europe.
 - B. Jefferson and his close collaborator, James Madison, thoroughly disagreed and proposed a sharply different vision of the United States and its foreign policies.
 1. Jefferson and Madison were southern agrarians who were deeply distrustful of concentrated power in any form and, thus, were opposed to a nation based on commerce and industry.
 2. They also objected to the fact that funding and assumption would favor northern banking interests over southern agrarian interests.
 3. Furthermore, they believed that Britain desired the destruction or permanent dependence of the United States and had the power to achieve it.
 4. Although the United States was weak at this time, Jefferson and Madison believed that it possessed the economic power to force British concessions and to do so without resort to war.
 5. The United States could also wring concessions from, and avoid dependence on, Great Britain by maintaining close commercial and political relations with France, thereby using France as a counterweight to British power.
 6. As with Hamilton, Jefferson developed this position before the 1793 radicalization of the French Revolution and ensuing war between republican France and the monarchs of Europe. But whereas Hamilton distrusted and feared radical French ideology, Jefferson saw the French Revolution as related to the American Revolution and as another step in the global republican revolution that the United States had begun and had a mission to support and spread.

- C. The question of whether this disagreement pitted Hamiltonian Realism against Jeffersonian Idealism or represented distinctions far more complex and nuanced has long divided historians and continues to do so.

III. The Hamilton-Jefferson division emerged in a series of major policy disagreements between 1789 and 1795.

- A. First came the import tax and Nootka Sound controversies, but these were only preliminaries to the major debate that then occurred over the appropriate American response to the new French Republic and the ensuing war in Europe.
 - 1. Hamilton and Jefferson agreed that the United States should remain neutral in this conflict but disagreed as to how that neutrality should be specifically implemented.
 - 2. Hamilton argued that the 1778 Treaty of Alliance with France should be considered suspended because it had been signed with a government that had now been overthrown and that neutrality should be proclaimed immediately. He also argued that the envoy of the new French Republic, Citizen Edmond-Charles Genêt, should not be received.
 - 3. Jefferson argued for receiving Genêt and against any immediate suspension of the alliance or declaration of neutrality, moves that Britain desired and should be forced to pay for via evacuation of the Northwest Posts.
 - 4. Washington compromised on April 22 by issuing a neutrality proclamation, as Hamilton had recommended, but refusing to declare the treaty suspended and agreeing to receive Genêt, as Jefferson had recommended. He and Jefferson thereby established two key precedents in American foreign policy: *de facto* recognition of any government that exercised power and the sanctity of treaties.
- B. Genêt sought to turn the United States into a base of operations for French privateering, and when Washington and Jefferson objected, he appealed over their heads to the American people. The move backfired and resulted in a blast of anti-French sentiment.
- C. At the same time, relations with England seriously deteriorated owing to the continued British occupation of the Northwest Posts, support for the Native American tribes in their war against the United States, and British assaults on U.S. neutral rights and ships on the high seas—moves that many Americans perceived as a coordinated effort to destroy the United States on land and sea.
- D. Fearing war, Washington and Hamilton decided to send Supreme Court Chief Justice John Jay (1745–1829) to England in an effort to resolve these problems.
 - 1. The British agreed to abandon the Northwest posts as a result of the U.S. military victory against the Northwest Indian Confederation at the 1794 Battle of Fallen Timbers, followed by the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, in which the tribes surrendered extensive land in Ohio.
 - 2. In return, however, Jay had to agree to the British definition of neutral rights.
- E. Jay's Treaty was one of the first and most important treaties negotiated by the new nation.
 - 1. On the positive side, it ensured a decade of peace with Great Britain and helped open the Old Northwest to American settlers.
 - 2. On the negative side, the treaty surrendered the American position on neutral rights in terms that were both insulting and humiliating.
 - 3. Those terms were also sectional and partisan, undercutting Jefferson's foreign policy and leading to both a public uproar and a constitutional crisis.
 - 4. The treaty thus became the single most important event in the formation of two national political parties: the Federalists, led by Washington, Adams, and Hamilton and identified as pro-British, and the Democratic-Republicans, led by Jefferson and Madison and identified as pro-French.
- F. The treaty would also have significant additional consequences for the United States over the rest of the decade, including spawning a major treaty with Spain, Washington's Farewell Address, an undeclared war with France, and a near civil war.

Suggested Readings:

Combs, *The Jay Treaty*.

DeConde, *Entangling Alliance*.

Ellis, *Founding Brothers*.

Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*.

Varg, *Foreign Policies of the Founding Fathers*.

Questions to Consider:

1. To what extent were the Jefferson-Hamilton differences over appropriate foreign policies the result of: (a) different assessments of the international situation and American power, (b) differences over appropriate domestic policies, (c) sectional interests, (d) conflicting interpretations of the Constitution, and (e) conflicting political philosophies and ideologies?
2. Why did the Jay Treaty have such far-reaching consequences?

Lecture Four

From the Farewell Address to the Quasi War

Scope: This lecture begins with an explanation of what Washington actually meant in his famous Farewell Address, then explores one of the most important but often ignored periods in U.S. history: the 1797–1801 presidency of Washington’s successor, John Adams (1735–1826). Washington’s previous policies made possible a decade of peace with Britain and Spain but led to a serious deterioration in relations with the French. Adams attempted to resolve Franco-American disagreements but was unsuccessful; the results were the notorious XYZ Affair and an undeclared naval war between the two nations. That conflict, in turn, threatened to become a full-scale, declared war and to ignite a civil war in the United States. That neither event occurred can be credited to the courage of Adams, who defied leaders of his own Federalist Party in order to obtain peace with France and an end to the Franco-American alliance by 1800. The ensuing Federalist split resulted in Adams’s defeat for reelection at the hands of the opposition leader, Thomas Jefferson, and thus, ended his political career.

Outline

- I. As previously mentioned, Jay’s Treaty had significant additional consequences for the United States, including spawning a major treaty with Spain, Washington’s Farewell Address, an undeclared war with France, and a near civil war by decade’s end. This lecture will explore each of these results individually.
- II. The major positive consequence of Jay’s Treaty—aside from the previously mentioned decade of peace with England and the opening of the Northwest to American settlement—was Pinckney’s Treaty with Spain.
 - A. At the same time that he sent Jay to London, Washington sent Thomas Pinckney (1750–1828) to Madrid to obtain free navigation of the Mississippi River, the right of deposit at New Orleans, and the 31st degree north latitude as the boundary of the United States with Spanish Florida.
 - B. By the time Pinckney arrived in Spain, the existence of the Jay Treaty was known, though not its specific contents. The Spanish feared that it was a formal alliance and would lead to combined Anglo-American military action against their New World possessions once they abandoned their alliance with England.
 - C. To prevent this outcome, the Spanish agreed in Pinckney’s Treaty to everything the Americans desired: free navigation of the Mississippi River, the right of deposit at New Orleans, and the 31st parallel as the boundary between the United States and Florida.
 - D. But Jay’s Treaty had the opposite impact on the French. They, too, concluded that it was a formal treaty of alliance and felt betrayed by the Americans. They began to seize U.S. ships and suspended diplomatic relations.
- III. By this time, Washington had decided not to seek a third term in the elections of 1796 and to publish a Farewell Address to the American people.
 - A. Destined to become one of the most famous documents in American history, that address is shrouded in myth. It was not a statement of isolationism and, indeed, never mentioned the word or the concept. Furthermore, it was not even a publicly delivered address; rather, it was printed in a Philadelphia newspaper. Nor was Washington its sole author; its foreign policy sections were co-authored by Hamilton.
 - B. Washington’s basic theme concerned the dangers of domestic factions. He warned that such factions would threaten liberty, lead to constant agitation, and “open the door to foreign influence and corruption” and, thus, a loss of independence.
 - C. He then warned against emotional attachments or antipathies toward other nations, as well as permanent alliances, and recommended as little political connection as possible while extending commercial relations with other nations.
 - D. Washington had voiced many of these ideas previously, but in the context of 1796, the Farewell Address was clearly designed as a public defense of his policies and an attack on his pro-French critics. As such, it was also a partisan political document geared to the 1796 election.
 - E. Simultaneously, it was a warning by a foreign policy realist against partisanship and emotionalism in foreign affairs and a proposed blueprint for achieving independence from Europe and empire in the New World.
 - F. Future generations, however, would interpret the Farewell Address quite differently.
- IV. As if to fulfill Washington’s warning, the French encouraged voters to support Jefferson. When Adams won, they authorized the seizure of any American vessel carrying British goods and refused to receive the new U.S. minister sent by Washington to Paris. Adams thus inherited a diplomatic crisis that would lead to an undeclared war.

- A. Adams attempted to avert war by sending three envoys to Paris to obtain a virtual Jay Treaty with France. But the result was the notorious XYZ Affair, in which the French foreign minister, Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand, demanded a bribe and a loan to open negotiations.
 - B. When news of this outrage became public, Adams and the Congress agreed to arm U.S. merchant ships and to implement additional military measures; the result was an undeclared naval conflict known as the Quasi War.
 - C. Adams and Congress also agreed to the passage of the notorious Alien and Sedition Acts directed against both immigrants and the Republican Party press, which they labeled as treasonous, and to the raising of a large army for possible use against the Republicans, as well as French and Spanish possessions in the New World.
 - D. Jefferson and Madison responded to this direct threat to civil liberties with the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions, claiming the right of a state to nullify a federal law that it considered unconstitutional.
 - E. The country now teetered on the edge of both civil war and full-scale war with France.
- V. The fact that no civil or international war ensued was primarily attributable to Adams's political courage.
- A. Stunned by the U.S. reaction and facing new problems as a result of a major naval defeat to the British in late 1798, the French repealed their decrees against U.S. shipping and made clear their desire for new envoys and peace.
 - B. Adams responded positively to the French overtures because he did not want to lead a weak and divided country into war and because he loathed and feared Hamilton and the High Federalists. He refused to ask Congress for a declaration of war or to fill the ranks of the army Hamilton would lead. Instead, he sent a new commission to France and purged his cabinet when Hamilton's supporters attempted to block him.
 - C. The resulting Convention of Mortefontaine in 1800 ended both the Quasi War and the French alliance of 1778. It also prevented a civil war. But it created a formal split in the Federalist Party when Hamilton publicly denounced Adams, leading to Jefferson's victory over Adams in the 1800 presidential election. As such, this diplomatic move ranks as one of the most profound and important acts of political courage in U.S. history.
- VI. In the next lecture, we'll look at the reasons Napoleon agreed to the Convention of Mortefontaine and Jefferson's reaction to the dictator's attempts to re-create the French Empire in the New World.

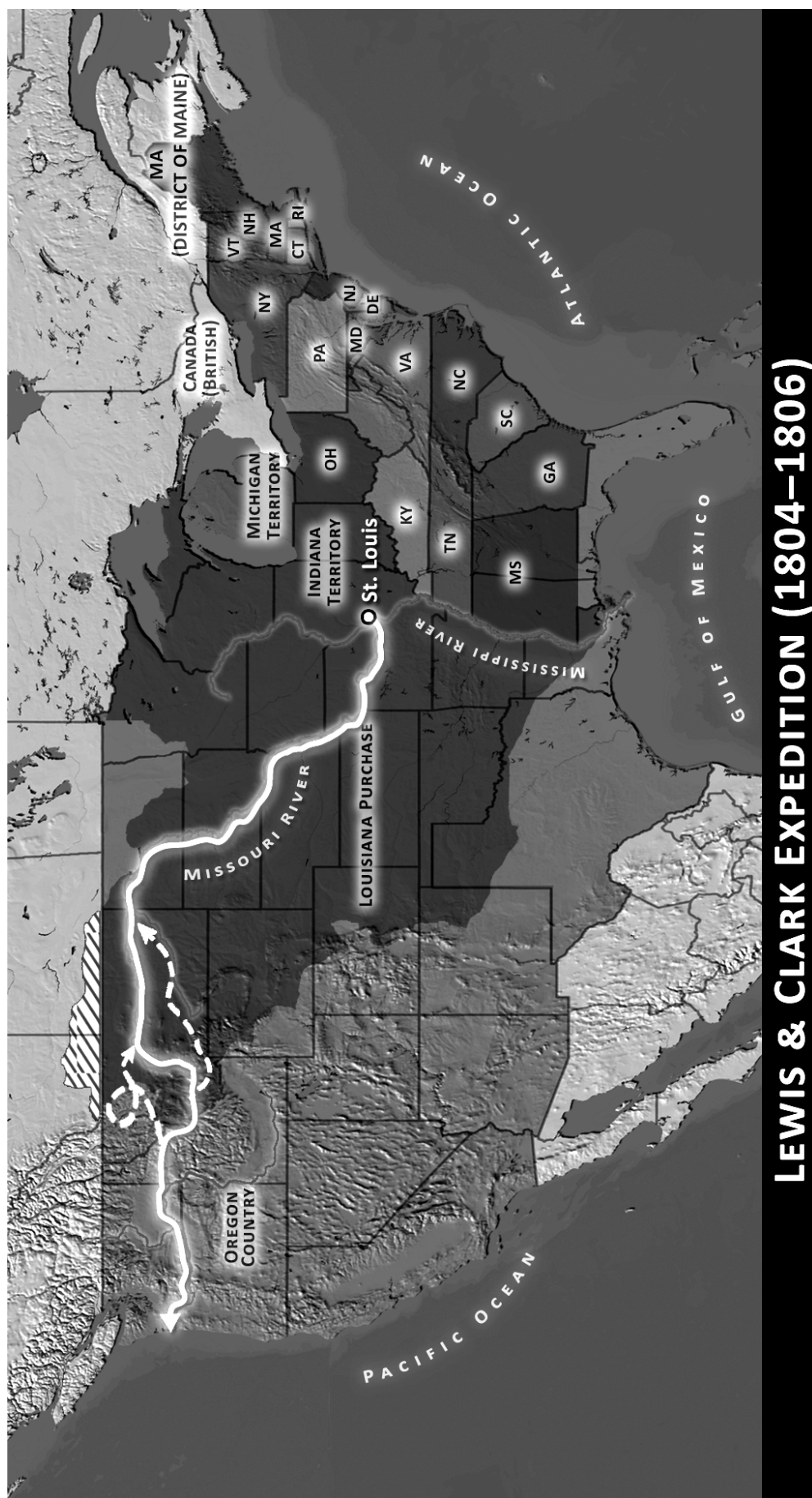
Suggested Readings:

DeConde, *The Quasi War*.

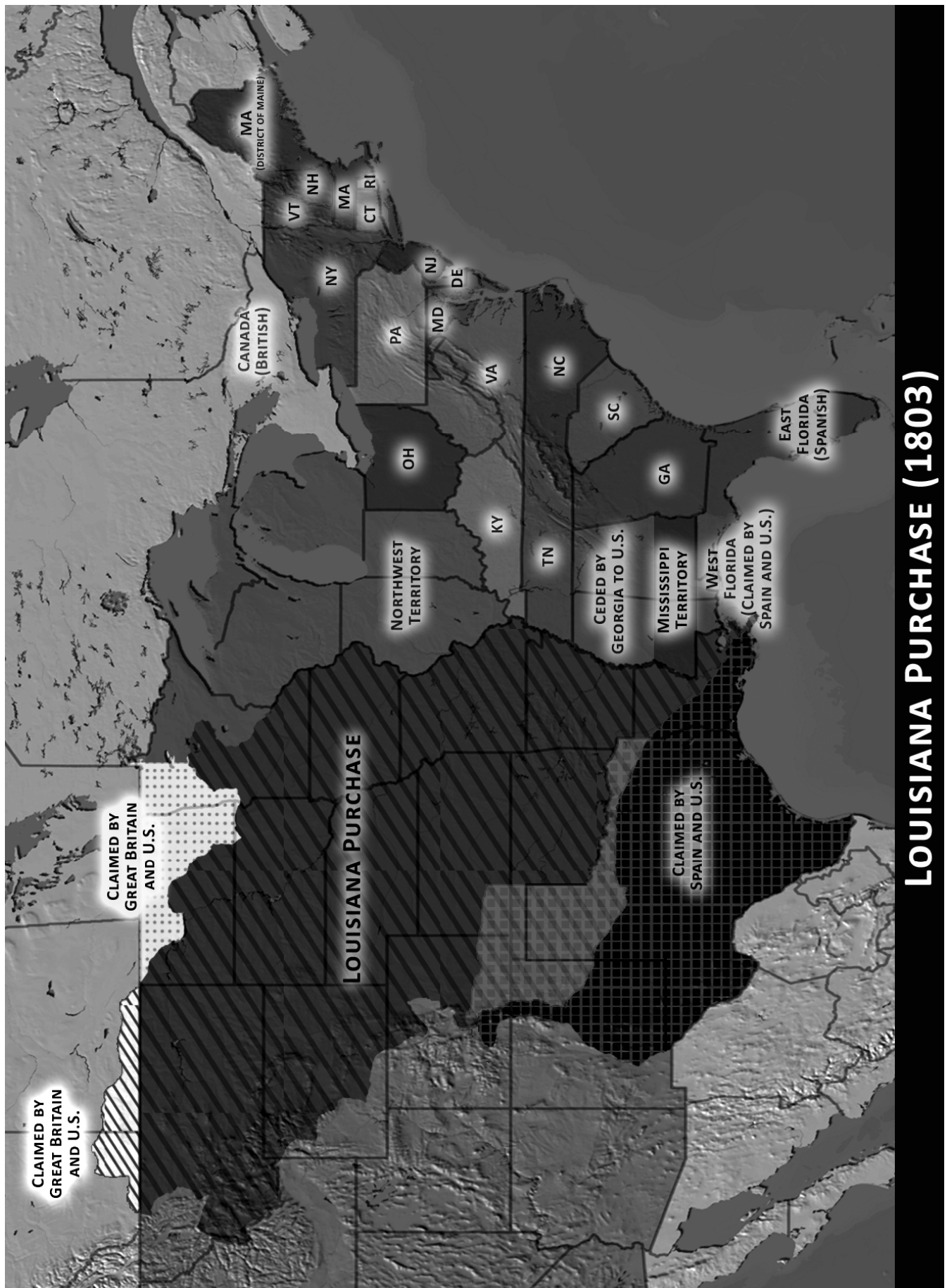
Gilbert, *To the Farewell Address*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How do you account for the differences between the meaning of Washington's Farewell Address in the context of 1796 and the meaning Americans gave it in later years?
2. In light of his critical contributions, why is John Adams less revered and studied than the other Founders?



LEWIS & CLARK EXPEDITION (1804-1806)



LOUISIANA PURCHASE (1803)

Lecture Five

Jefferson and the “Empire of Liberty”

Scope: Thomas Jefferson’s election to the presidency in 1800 would lead to a dramatic shift in U.S. foreign policy, and his ideas regarding landed expansion and its relationship to liberty would dominate domestic policy for more than a century. This lecture explores those ideas and Jefferson’s greatest success in obtaining more land for the United States: The Louisiana Purchase more than doubled the size of the country in 1803. We will also examine Jefferson’s numerous efforts to enlarge the nation even further through his expansive claims regarding the boundaries of the Louisiana Purchase, as well as the famous exploratory mission of Lewis and Clark.

Outline

- I. Thomas Jefferson’s election to the presidency would lead to a dramatic shift in U.S. foreign policy, one based on his overall political philosophy, as well as his foreign policy views.
 - A. Key beliefs within that overall political philosophy included republicanism as the guarantor of liberty, an agrarian society as the one best designed to promote and maintain liberty, and a strict interpretation of the Constitution as the surest way to avoid centralized governmental tyranny.
 - B. In foreign policy, Jefferson was, first and foremost, an intense nationalist who saw the United States as the haven of liberty and its republican experiment as the wave of the future for the entire world. In effect, he equated the national interests of the United States with the interests of human freedom and progress and, thus, can be considered the nation’s first ideologue.
 - C. Jefferson saw Great Britain as the most powerful and dangerous enemy of the United States. France was a useful counterweight and, in its republican phase, an ideological ally.
 - D. Jefferson was also a semi-pacifist who believed that war was irrational and who desired isolation from the quarrels of Europe. He realized that complete isolation was not possible, however, and believed that trade and economic coercion could provide rational alternatives to war.
 - E. He was a strong proponent of landed expansion across North America as a means of maintaining both an agrarian republic and independence from Europe.
 - F. As president, Jefferson’s intense nationalism and desire for landed expansion and an “empire of liberty” would triumph over and negate his other beliefs—most notably, his pacifism, his strict interpretation of the Constitution, and his anti-British and pro-French positions.
- II. Jefferson’s great foreign policy triumph was the Louisiana Purchase, which more than doubled the size of the United States.
 - A. American settlers had been moving into this Spanish territory ever since the 1795 Pinckney Treaty and by 1801, they outnumbered French and Spanish settlers. Jefferson believed that this movement would peacefully Americanize the area and eventually force a weak Spain to sell it.
 - B. In 1800, however, Napoleon signed the Treaty of San Ildefonso with Spain, regaining Louisiana for France as part of an effort to reestablish a French Empire in the New World. Jefferson found this move threatening in two respects.
 1. Unlike the weak Spain, a strong France could stifle the process of Americanization in Louisiana.
 2. Further, three-eighths of all American produce now traveled down the Mississippi River and through New Orleans; a strong France in that port constituted a mortal threat to both expansion and existing U.S. territory. To make matters worse, the Spanish governor of Louisiana revoked the right of deposit in 1802 when the treaty with France was formalized.
 - C. Jefferson sent emissaries to Paris with instructions to purchase New Orleans or get an expanded right of deposit. He further told them to approach the British for joint military action if France refused and blocked the Mississippi River.
 - D. Jefferson’s emissaries found Napoleon interested in selling not merely New Orleans but all of Louisiana as a result of his frustrations in fighting a slave insurrection in Haiti and his military and financial worries in Europe.
 - E. The United States thus obtained 828,000 square miles and New Orleans itself for \$15 million in one of the greatest land deals in history.
 - F. Jefferson realized that the purchase violated his strict interpretation of the Constitution and, at first, desired a constitutional amendment granting the power for such a purchase, but the cabinet persuaded him against such a time-consuming process.

- G. Whether Jefferson was an astute diplomat or merely lucky remains a matter of historical dispute. What is clear is that he violated many of his cherished beliefs to fulfill his dream of a continental empire.

III. Jefferson would further violate his beliefs in his efforts to obtain the most extensive boundaries possible for the Louisiana Purchase.

- A. He had planned what would become the Lewis and Clark expedition as a way to lay claim to the area as early as the 1780s, and he obtained congressional funding for that expedition before he even knew that Napoleon would sell the territory.
- B. He also instructed Lewis and Clark to explore as far as the Pacific Coast, thereby establishing a claim to the Oregon Territory.
- C. Jefferson further insisted that the Louisiana Purchase included West Florida and Texas, and he threatened an alliance with England as a means of forcing Spain to negotiate the sale of these two areas. He would fail in both efforts, but his attempts set the stage for later American acquisition.

IV. Jefferson's expansionism had numerous positive and negative consequences for the United States.

- A. It more than doubled the size of the nation, made it one of the largest countries in the world, and provided abundant land for Jefferson's agrarian-republican utopia. It also meant that in all likelihood, no European-style balance of power would emerge in North America; instead, the United States would dominate the continent.
- B. But to obtain this land, Jefferson was willing to act in a duplicitous manner, violate many of his beliefs, and set some dangerous precedents for the future. In the process, he also planted the seeds of extinction for Native American cultures and, ironically, provided the resources and the national power to make the United States the commercial and industrial leviathan that Hamilton desired.

Suggested Readings:

DeConde, *This Affair of Louisiana*.

Kaplan, *Thomas Jefferson*.

Tucker and Hendrickson, *Empire of Liberty*.

Questions to Consider:

1. To what extent did the Louisiana Purchase result from Jefferson's astute diplomacy as opposed to sheer luck, as his critics claim?
2. Was Jefferson's "empire of liberty" possible, or was it, in reality, an impossible combination of contradictory concepts; that is, can one have liberty with empire?

Lecture Six

The “Second War for Independence”

Scope: In addition to desiring landed expansion in North America, Jefferson and his followers strongly believed in the ability of peaceful economic coercion to obtain their foreign policy goals without resort to war and, thereby, the remaking of the rules of international relations. This belief was sorely tested between 1806 and 1812, as both Jefferson and his successor, James Madison, attempted to halt British and French wartime violations of American neutral rights through a series of economic retaliatory acts against the two powers. The failure of those acts, combined with a perceived British-Native American threat in the Northwest, led the United States into a second war with England in 1812. Although that war began disastrously for the Americans and is often considered a stalemate at best, it actually resulted in numerous gains for the United States—most notably, added security and British/European respect. This lecture concludes with an explanation of those gains and why the War of 1812 is often referred to as the Second American War for Independence.

Outline

- I. In 1803, war resumed in Europe. By 1806, France, under Napoleon, was supreme on land, while Britain remained supreme at sea. The ensuing stalemate led both powers to practice economic warfare that would deeply affect the United States and lead it to war against Britain by 1812.
 - A. Complaints against Britain focused on its impressment of seamen from U.S. merchant ships, its broad definition of contraband liable to seizure, its mid-ocean or “paper” blockades, and its so-called Rule of 1756.
 - B. Although Britain justified these moves as war measures, Americans saw them as primarily designed to destroy a commercial rival that had become the largest neutral carrier in the world.
 - C. Napoleon retaliated with his Continental System, a series of decrees that not only closed Europe to British ships and goods but also made liable to seizure any neutral ship stopping in Britain or submitting to British customs or inspection.
 - D. As a result, U.S. ships could not trade with Europe without being subject to seizure by one side or the other.
- II. Jefferson had long believed that the British were more of a threat to the United States than the French and that commercial retaliation could force concessions without resort to war; as president, he would practice such a policy.
 - A. He would do so with a new belligerency, one that illustrated militant opposition to any attacks on U.S. sovereignty and honor.
 - B. In 1807, the *Chesapeake*, one of the U.S. warships bound for the Barbary conflicts, was attacked and boarded by a British warship searching for deserters.
 - C. In response, Jefferson called Congress into special session and requested an embargo on all U.S. exports and shipping. His goals were to stop the ship seizures of both powers, issue a war warning to the British, and provide time to prepare for war if necessary; at the same time, he sought to use such economic coercion as a possible alternative to war. Gradually, this use of economic pressure became his great experiment and his great failure.
 1. Jefferson believed that Britain needed U.S. goods more than the United States needed British goods and that the embargo would force British and French concessions without resort to war. But it actually complemented Napoleon’s Continental System and hurt the American economy more than the British economy.
 2. The embargo also led to massive opposition and smuggling in Federalist New England, to which Jefferson responded with coercive measures that violated civil liberties and expanded national power as much as war would have done.
 3. Ironically, the embargo promoted manufacturing that Jefferson had previously opposed.
 4. It also led to great gains for the Federalist Party in the 1808 elections and split the Republicans into warring factions.
- III. James Madison, Jefferson’s successor as president, would also attempt economic coercion, but in June of 1812, he gave up on this policy in favor of war.
 - A. Madison cited four issues in his war message, three of which concerned neutral rights: impressment, which was an assault on U.S. sovereignty; British naval acts off the U.S. coastline and paper blockades on the high seas; and the Orders in Council, which he argued were primarily designed to destroy U.S. commercial competition.
 - B. The fourth issue was British support for the efforts of Shawnee leader Tecumseh in the Old Northwest to block further American expansion by forming a confederation of all Native American tribes along the western frontier.

- C. Supported if not pressured by a group of new, young, and highly nationalistic Republican congressmen known as the War Hawks, Madison argued that these British acts amounted to war against the United States.
 - D. Congress deliberated for 17 days before agreeing to war. It did so by close votes in both houses, with sharp splits along both sectional and party lines. Overall, the Republicans, who were dominant in the South and West, supported war, while the Federalists, who were dominant in New England, opposed it.
- IV. The War of 1812 contradicts the cliché that the United States always wins the war but loses the peace.
- A. Militarily, the nation almost lost the war, and at best, it achieved a stalemate by 1814.
 - B. Diplomatically, it also appeared to achieve a stalemate. In the Treaty of Ghent that ended the war (within the context of the end of the Napoleonic Wars), the United States and Britain essentially agreed to return to the status quo ante bellum.
 - C. Nonetheless, this conclusion masks the enormous gains the United States obtained from the war effort and peace treaty.
 1. The major Native American confederations in the Northwest and Southwest were militarily defeated and destroyed during the war, and the British abandoned their efforts to create a Native American buffer state in the Old Northwest.
 2. The United States gained new respect from Britain and the other powers of Europe for its military efforts and was acknowledged as the major power in North America.
 3. Conflicts over neutral rights disappeared with the end of the Anglo-French wars in Europe. The resulting European peace also ended American preoccupation with Europe and allowed the United States to concentrate on internal development and continental expansion.
 4. The navy that the Federalists had created in the 1790s distinguished itself during the war and remained a potent force afterward. It served as the cutting edge of American commercial expansion through its numerous exploratory missions and treaties, most notably, with China and Japan.
 5. The bilateral commissions established in the Treaty of Ghent to deal with remaining Anglo-American disputes were successful and set the stage for the Anglo-American entente that would be so important to U.S. diplomatic successes in the ensuing decade.
 6. Continued Federalist opposition to the war led to the demise of this national political party and a period of one-party rule in the United States known as the “Era of Good Feelings.” Although not entirely true to its name, the era was one of intense nationalism and optimism. In reality, it also transformed the republican experiment, as the Jeffersonian agrarian vision gave way to expanded commerce, manufacturing, and market values.

Suggested Readings:

Brown, *The Republic in Peril*.

Horsman, *The Causes of the War of 1812*.

Stagg, *Mr. Madison’s War*.

Watts, *The Republic Reborn*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why did the United States go to war with Great Britain in 1812? Could or should this war have been avoided?
2. Assess the numerous successes and failures of both Federalist foreign policies from 1789–1800 and Republican foreign policies from 1801–1816. In retrospect, which policies were more appropriate for the young nation?

Lecture Seven

John Quincy Adams & American Continentalism

Scope: The conclusion of the Anglo-French wars in Europe ended the assaults on American neutral rights and the ensuing American preoccupation with European affairs. It also opened the North American continent to further U.S. expansion. A vital component of that expansion was the brilliant diplomacy of John Quincy Adams, considered by many historians to have been America's greatest secretary of state. This lecture examines his continental vision for the United States and his numerous diplomatic achievements in support of that vision: the Transcontinental Treaty with Spain that gave Florida to the United States and a claim to the Pacific Coast, the series of critical treaties with Great Britain that settled outstanding Anglo-American territorial and commercial disputes and made the former enemies unofficial allies, and the resulting Monroe Doctrine that Adams wrote and that defined the entire Western Hemisphere as an area reserved for future U.S. expansion and influence.

Outline

- I. John Quincy Adams (1767–1848) clearly ranks as one of the most important but least recognized early figures in the rise of the United States to superpower status.
 - A. He was one of the first policymakers to visualize the United States expanding across the entire North American continent and was a strong proponent of commercial expansion overseas, thereby neatly fusing old Federalist with old Republican foreign policies.
 - B. When he took over the State Department in 1817, he had already amassed a wealth of diplomatic and political experience as minister to the Netherlands, Prussia, Russia, and Britain, as well as senator from Massachusetts and negotiator at Ghent.
 - C. As secretary of state from 1817 to 1824, Adams was responsible for a series of major territorial agreements with Great Britain and Spain that would give the United States the rest of Florida, as well as a major claim to the Oregon Territory and the Pacific Coast. He was also the primary author of what became known as the Monroe Doctrine, and he is considered by many to have been the greatest secretary of state in U.S. history.
- II. Adams believed that good relations with Britain were essential to his expansionist plans and quickly acted to negotiate a series of crucial Anglo-American agreements.
 - A. Simultaneously, Britain began to recognize the importance of good relations with the United States in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars.
 - B. After the Treaty of Ghent, Adams, then U.S. minister in London, negotiated a new commercial treaty with Britain in 1815 that included the most-favored-nation clause.
 - C. In 1817, his overture led to the Rush-Bagot exchange of notes and the ensuing treaty that limited naval forces on the Great Lakes and Lake Champlain; this was the first reciprocal naval arms limitation treaty in modern history.
 - D. The Boundary Convention of 1818 dealt with issues of trade, fishing rights, and slaves, as well as the boundary between the United States and British North America.
 1. It set the boundary at the 49th degree north latitude from the Lake of the Woods to the Rocky Mountains.
 2. It established joint occupation of the Oregon Territory when the two sides could not agree to a permanent division of the area.
 3. The United States obtained permanent fishing rights off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador.
 4. The two nations agreed to Russian mediation of the American demand for compensation for slaves seized by the British during the War of 1812, a mediation that eventually led to Britain paying the United States \$1.2 million.
 5. The treaty also renewed indefinitely the clauses of the 1815 commercial treaty, and in 1822, Britain partially opened the West Indies to U.S. ships.
 - E. Although by no means ending all disputes between the two nations, these agreements established cordial relations that freed Adams for more intense territorial negotiations with the Spanish and would eventually result in the Monroe Doctrine.
- III. In the negotiations that would result in the Transcontinental Treaty of 1819, Adams desired to obtain the rest of Florida, Spanish agreement to the Louisiana Purchase and to boundaries that would include Texas, and removal of any Spanish claim to Oregon, without limiting his freedom of action to recognize the newly independent republics of Latin America.
 - A. Adams used General Andrew Jackson's seizure of East Florida in 1818 to break a deadlock in the negotiations and force Spain to accede to his wishes.

- B. Consequently, the Spanish agreed to cede Florida to the United States in return for U.S. assumption of \$5 million worth of old claims by its citizens against Spain and to a boundary between U.S. and Spanish territory that eliminated Spanish claims to Oregon and implicitly recognized U.S. claims there. In return, Adams gave up U.S. claims to Texas but retained full freedom of action in Latin America.
- C. In 1822, after Spain finally ratified the treaty, the United States recognized the independence of the republics of Latin America.

IV. In the following year, Adams authored one of the most famous documents in American history: the Monroe Doctrine.

- A. The doctrine originated as a response to Russian claims to the Pacific Coast down to 51 degrees north latitude, the suppression by the Holy Alliance of republican revolutions in Italy and Spain, and an ensuing fear of European reconquest in Latin America.
- B. British Foreign Secretary George Canning similarly feared an effort by the Holy Alliance to reconquer Latin America and suggested a joint Anglo-American note warning the European powers against any such effort.
- C. Adams convinced the cabinet and President James Monroe (1758–1831) to issue a unilateral statement, one that appeared in the president's annual message to Congress in late 1823 and that enunciated a series of major principles:
 1. Non-colonization: The Western Hemisphere was no longer open to colonization by the Europeans.
 2. Non-intervention: The two hemispheres constituted two distinct political and geographic areas, one ruled by monarchies and the other consisting of republics. The United States would oppose any effort to extend the European system to the New World.
 3. Non-interference: In return for non-intervention, the United States would not interfere in the internal affairs of Europe.
 4. No transfer (actually a corollary asserted separately but implicit within the doctrine): The United States would oppose the transfer of any existing colony in the Western Hemisphere from one European power to another.
- D. Contrary to popular myth, the Monroe Doctrine had no legal status and was ignored by the European powers. What prevented European intervention in the New World at this time was not this bold assertion but, as Adams realized, London's refusal to tolerate such intervention and the power of the British fleet. For many decades, that fleet would, in effect, enforce the doctrine.
- E. What Adams (and Monroe) had done was to assert a series of principles that essentially declared the entire Western Hemisphere to be a U.S. sphere of influence. The United States did not yet have the power to enforce these principles, but Adams realized that the British would enforce them in their own interests.
- F. Adams and Monroe had, in effect, fulfilled Washington's prophecy in his Farewell Address: that given time and peace, the United States would be able to defy the powers of Europe.
- G. Ironically, Adams later turned against the expansionism he had done so much to promote. He also warned Americans against going abroad on ideological crusades to remake the world, warnings that were clearly prescient.

Suggested Readings:

Bemis, *John Quincy Adams and the Foundations of American Foreign Policy*.

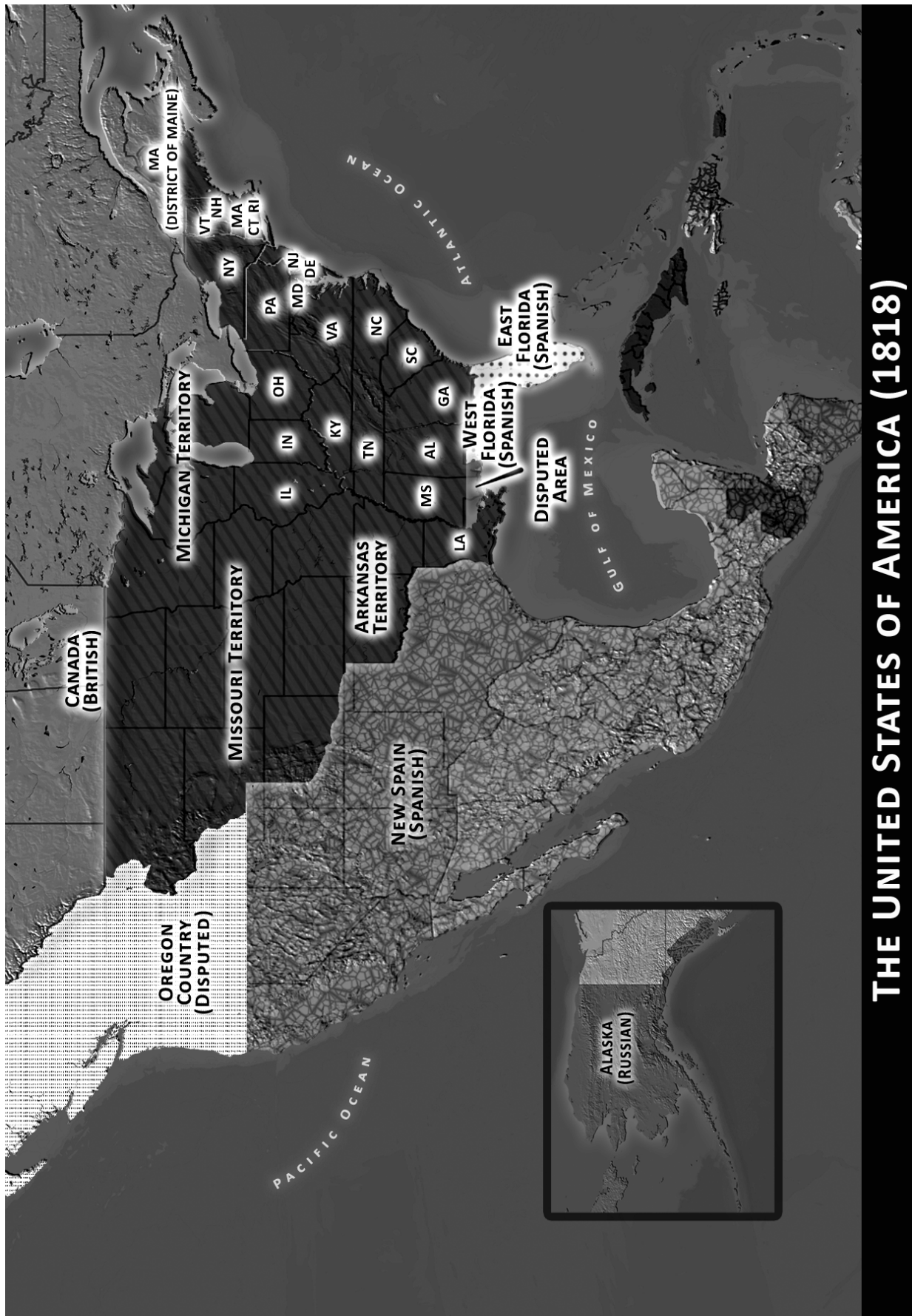
Dangerfield, *The Era of Good Feelings*.

Lewis, *John Quincy Adams*.

Weeks, *John Quincy Adams and American Global Empire*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why was Adams able to achieve such extraordinary successes as secretary of state?
2. Is the Monroe Doctrine an assertion of an essentially defensive or an aggressive U.S. policy in the Western Hemisphere?



Lecture Eight

“Manifest Destiny” and War with Mexico

Scope: The diplomacy of John Quincy Adams ushered in a period of enormous territorial expansion across the North American continent that, by 1848, included the acquisition of Oregon, Texas, California, and New Mexico—the first by treaty but the others by war. This period also witnessed the expulsion of the Native American tribes east of the Mississippi River. Americans justified their expansionist behavior by an ideology known as “Manifest Destiny.” This lecture explains that ideology and examines the specific territorial acquisitions of the 1840s, with a particular emphasis on the role of President James K. Polk.

Outline

- I. The 1830s and 1840s would witness an enormous burst of territorial expansion.
 - A. Americans defined and justified this expansion as Manifest Destiny—a term coined by New York newspaper editor John O’Sullivan in 1839.
 1. The United States, according to O’Sullivan, was a special nation destined by God’s will to expand over the entire continent and, perhaps, the entire hemisphere and to become the greatest nation in world history.
 2. O’Sullivan saw this as a peaceful process of settlers moving westward, but the reality would be quite aggressive and would involve numerous military conflicts, including a war with Mexico.
 - B. This aggressive expansionism was partially the result of changes in American thought patterns.
 1. This was the age of the “common man” in politics and *laissez-faire* capitalism in economics.
 2. These thought patterns reinforced the old Jeffersonian link between democracy and landed expansion by emphasizing the frontier as the place where individualism and upward social mobility could flourish, with President Andrew Jackson (1767–1845) himself as the great symbol of this frontier democracy.
 3. Native American tribalism stood as the antithesis to this value system of individualism and material acquisitiveness.
 4. The religious revival known as the Second Great Awakening, with its democratization of salvation and perfectionist doctrines, also played a role in this expansion by reinforcing the belief that the United States was God’s chosen nation.
 5. Simultaneously, a new “scientific” racism developed in both Europe and the United States that allowed Americans to argue that they were genetically, politically, and culturally superior and, therefore, had the right to dispossess “inferior” peoples who inhabited the land they desired.
 6. Furthermore, the Enlightenment values and internationalism of the nation’s Founding Fathers disappeared with their passing, to be replaced by the intense provincialism and nationalism of their children.
 - C. Expansionism was also the result of the development of steamboats and railroads, a transportation revolution that made possible growth across the continent.
 - D. Sectional interests of the West, the South, and the North played a role in continental expansionism, as well.
 - E. Paradoxically, this super-confident nationalism coexisted with a paranoid fear of threats from abroad. Europeans, Americans feared, were plotting to thwart American expansion in order to expand themselves, thereby justifying American growth as a defensive move.
- II. The clear precursors to this major burst of landed expansion were the actions of John Quincy Adams and the removal of the eastern Native American tribes to the area west of the Mississippi River in the 1820s and 1830s.
 - A. The War of 1812 had been a disaster for these tribes and had broken their power to resist American encroachment.
 - B. Between 1826 and 1840, the United States would sign approximately 100 treaties with Native American tribes involving acquisition of their lands.
 - C. The most famous—or infamous—case was the removal of the Cherokees from Georgia and Tennessee against their will in the 1830s, accomplished under the terms of the 1830 Indian Removal Act signed by President Jackson.
- III. While Native American tribes were being removed to land west of the Mississippi River, American settlers were flocking to the northern Mexican province of Texas.
 - A. The Spanish and Mexican governments had first encouraged such settlement as a means of creating a buffer state to block U.S. government efforts to annex it, but that policy boomeranged by creating a Trojan Horse with 30,000 loyal Americans in Texas.
 - B. When the dictator Santa Anna seized power in Mexico and attempted to centralize, these settlers successfully revolted, declared a republic, and requested annexation to the United States as a slave state.

- C. Presidents Jackson and Van Buren both rejected annexation because of fears that it would exacerbate the slavery issue at home and lead to war with Mexico. Texas was, thus, left to defend itself against a Mexico that constantly threatened reconquest.
 - D. Texans were supported by the British, who desired an independent entity to block further U.S. expansion. British support, in turn, led many Americans to favor annexation as a way to block the British!
 - E. In 1843–1844, President John Tyler pressed for annexation, but the Senate refused to agree.
 - F. In the presidential election of 1844, the Democratic winner, James K. Polk (1795–1849), strongly supported annexation. The now lame-duck Tyler resubmitted an annexation measure. The Senate barely agreed, with a vote of 27 to 25, whereupon Tyler signed the measure, three days before Polk was inaugurated. The new president thus inherited a diplomatic crisis with Mexico.
 - G. Tension with Britain during the 1830s and 1840s also involved disagreements over the Canadian-American boundary; Maine, Minnesota, and the Pacific Northwest; and American support for the Canadian Rebellion of 1837.
- IV. Polk, the new president, was a rabid expansionist who would use the Texas issue to initiate a war with Mexico for the acquisition of California and simultaneously threaten war with England over Oregon.
- A. During the presidential campaign of 1844, Polk had combined the Texas and Oregon issues by calling for the “re-annexation” of Texas and “reoccupation” of the entire Oregon Territory. He did so as a means of overcoming the sectional divide over slavery and forming a national consensus in favor of expansion.
 - B. After a year of both diplomacy and threats of war, Polk agreed to a compromise with Britain that divided the Oregon Territory at the 49th degree north latitude—though he insisted that the Senate first advise him to accept this compromise.
 - C. Simultaneously, he used a combination of diplomacy and threats of war over the boundary of Texas to force Mexico to sell California. In this case, war ensued, with Polk using his presidential powers as commander in chief to force a military confrontation, then manipulating the subsequent vote in Congress so that opponents could not dissent without appearing unpatriotic.
 - 1. To minimize those divisions and associated political problems, Polk planned a short and limited war in which U.S. forces would quickly secure the disputed Texas border and seize California and New Mexico. They rapidly did so, but Mexico refused to surrender.
 - 2. Consequently, Polk sent additional military forces under General Winfield Scott to invade central Mexico.
 - 3. Scott’s conquest of Mexico City led many Americans—including Polk—to consider annexation of the entire country.
 - 4. But when a new Mexican government finally agreed to Polk’s original territorial terms, he accepted the treaty as the best means of ending what had become a highly unpopular and divisive war.
- V. Historians disagree sharply in their assessment of Polk and this era of expansion. Many admire him for his territorial acquisitions, while others condemn him for initiating a war of aggression that had devastating long-term consequences.

Suggested Readings:

Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*.

Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Annexation*.

Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny*.

Weeks, *Building the Continental Empire*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What were the most important factors in the burst of American continental expansion that occurred in the years between the end of the War of 1812 and 1848?
2. Does James K. Polk deserve the reputation as a near-great president that he has received in several presidential polls? Why?

Lecture Nine

Causes and Diplomacy of the Civil War

Scope: The territorial acquisitions of the 1840s enormously exacerbated sectional tensions and played a major role in the outbreak of Civil War in 1861. This lecture will first explore the relationship between territorial expansion and the coming of the Civil War, then focus on Union and Confederate diplomacy during that conflict. British and French intervention on the side of the South was a distinct possibility, and it would have virtually guaranteed Confederate victory in the same way that French intervention in the War for Independence led to American victory over the British. Such intervention appeared quite likely, especially in 1861–1862, but it never materialized. This lecture seeks to explain why through an examination of both southern and northern diplomacy with the European powers.

Outline

- I. The conquest and acquisition of Texas, California, and New Mexico led to massive debate over whether slavery should be extended into new territories and doomed additional efforts at expansion during the 1850s.
 - A. The debate over the Wilmot Proviso banning slavery in territories acquired from Mexico tied up Congress until 1850, when a major compromise was finally reached.
 - B. Because that compromise admitted California into the union as a free state, southerners searched desperately for more conquests in Central America and the Caribbean—most notably, in Cuba—to reestablish sectional balance in the Senate.
 - C. The California Gold Rush of 1849 reinforced expansionist efforts in Central America, particularly in Nicaragua and Panama, in order to construct a canal or railroad for easy and quick transit to California.
 - D. These expansionist efforts were supported by President Franklin Pierce (1804–1869), who actively sought to obtain Cuba from Spain, and by independent soldiers of fortune, known as filibusters, who attempted to create private empires in Central America and the Caribbean. But most such efforts failed militarily and politically.
 - E. Southerners also pressed for and obtained, with the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, an overthrow of the 1820 Missouri Compromise ban on slavery north of the 36°30' parallel in the Louisiana Purchase. This led to virtual civil war in Kansas and the creation of the sectional Republican Party, which opposed any slavery expansion into the territories. The party's electoral successes by 1860 led directly to southern secession and civil war.
- II. Confederate diplomacy during the Civil War focused on obtaining British and French recognition and aid. If successful, such recognition and aid would be as important in ensuring Confederate independence as French recognition and aid had been in ensuring American independence during the Revolutionary War.
 - A. Britain and France had numerous reasons to support the South.
 1. A permanently divided United States would pose less of a threat to their possessions and interests in the Western Hemisphere.
 2. Napoleon III of France was determined to conquer Mexico, and the success of this mission required negation of any effective U.S. opposition.
 3. The critical British textile industry relied on the South's cotton.
 - B. Knowing the importance of cotton, the South placed an embargo on its sale as a means of forcing British intervention.
 - C. France would not act without Britain, and numerous factors also argued against British recognition and intervention.
 1. Britain had a huge surplus of cotton and cotton goods in 1861.
 2. Britain also relied on the North's foodstuffs.
 3. Britain opposed and had already abolished slavery within its empire.
 4. As an empire, Britain was loath to support rebellion.
 5. Union Secretary of State William Henry Seward (1801–1872) threatened war if Britain recognized or aided the Confederacy.
 6. European diplomatic tradition dictated that a government should not be recognized until it had shown its ability to maintain independence.
 - D. Given all these factors, British behavior would depend to a great extent on military and political events during the war.
- III. In retrospect, the strongest possibility of European intervention came in 1861–1862.
 - A. In 1861, a crisis occurred over Union seizure of Confederate diplomats from the British mail ship *Trent*, but President Lincoln (1809–1865) and Seward backed down under British pressure and the crisis ended.

- B. In the summer and early fall of 1862, Confederate military victories led the British to seriously consider a mediation offer that would have led to recognition.
 - C. A divided British government decided to await the outcome of General Lee's first invasion of the North, which ended with a tactical draw at the battle of Antietam. Antietam put an end to Lee's invasion, provided Lincoln with the opportunity to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, and caused the British government to decide against mediation.
 - D. Never again would the British come so close to intervening, and major Union military victories in 1863–1864 ended any realistic possibility of such intervention.
 - E. Additional crises erupted in 1863 over the building of British commerce raiders and warships for the Confederacy, but a diplomatic rupture was avoided through astute diplomacy on both sides, and the issues were finally resolved in the 1871 Treaty of Washington.
 - F. The failure to obtain British recognition and intervention was a major factor in the Confederate loss, a defeat that guaranteed continued American dominance in the Western Hemisphere and growing status as a great power.
 - G. The Confederate defeat also marked the triumph of the industrial North over the agrarian South, thereby guaranteeing both continued industrial expansion and a more centralized and powerful national government. These would be vital components in the emergence of the United States as a great power.
- IV. Seward illustrated the nation's emerging great-power status immediately after the war when he moved to force the French out of Mexico.
- A. During the Civil War, Napoleon III had succeeded in conquering Mexico and installing the Austrian Archduke Maximilian as emperor.
 - B. Seward made clear his opposition to this violation of the Monroe Doctrine but was powerless to act during the Civil War.
 - C. In 1865, Seward increased his diplomatic protests to Paris and sent substantial troops to the Mexican border. In early 1866, he demanded and obtained a French military withdrawal and blocked any Austrian intervention.
 - D. Although some historians credit this result and Maximilian's subsequent demise to Mexican guerrilla warfare and European preoccupations, others have argued that Seward's pressure forced both the French and the Austrians to back down, successfully illustrating that the United States had already attained great-power status.

Suggested Readings:

Crook, *The North, the South, and the Powers, 1861–1865*.

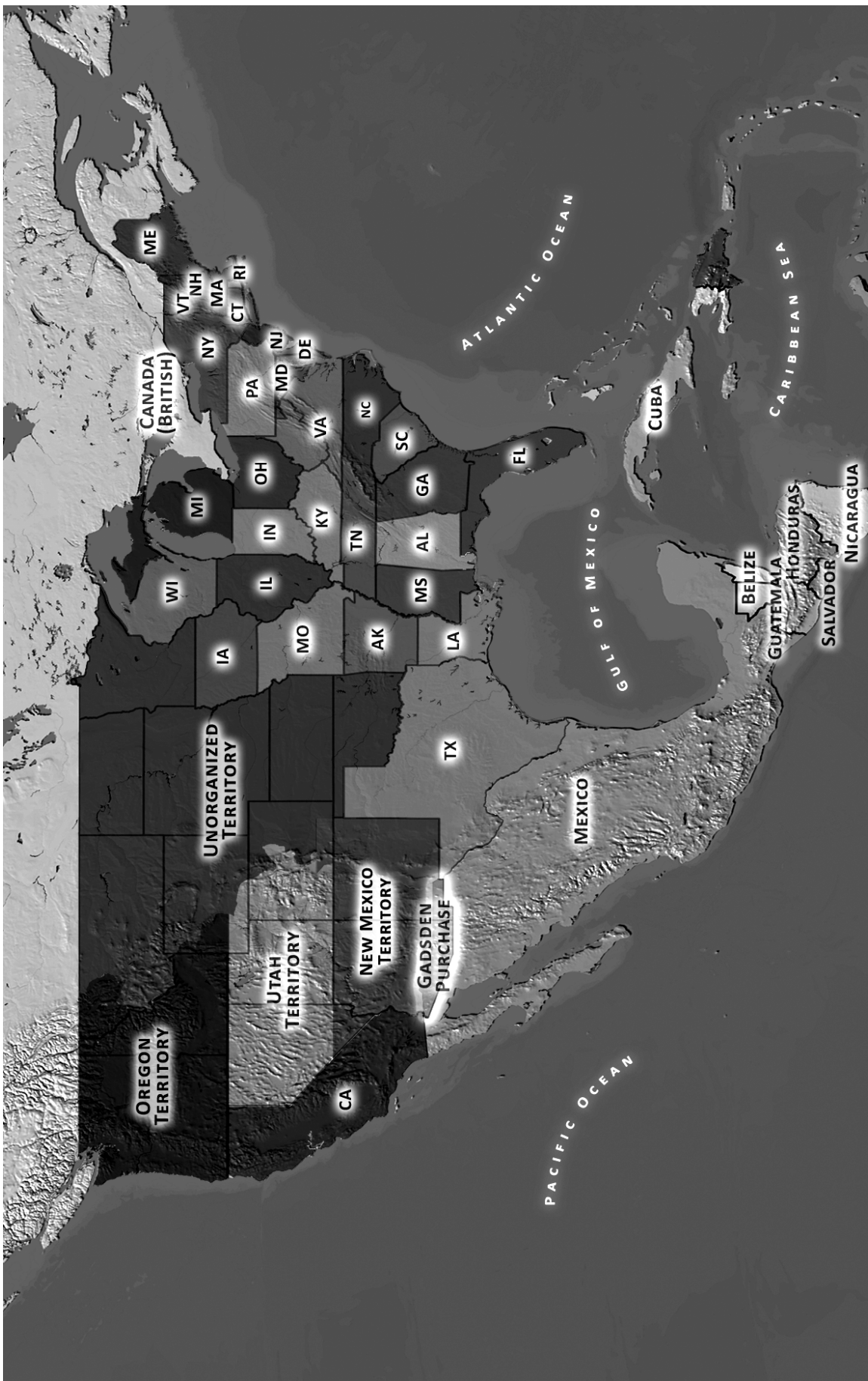
Jones, *Union in Peril*.

May, *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire, 1854–1861*.

Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Compare and contrast the factors that led France to intervene in the American War for Independence with the factors that led Great Britain and France not to intervene in the American Civil War. How do you account for the Confederate failure to repeat the earlier American success in obtaining European intervention?
2. In what ways did Union victory in the Civil War virtually guarantee great-power status for the United States?



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (1850)

Lecture Ten

The “New Empire” of Overseas Imperialism

Scope: Between 1865 and 1898, the United States appeared to enter a “dark age” of virtually no expansion or even diplomacy, followed by an extraordinary burst of expansion that focused on a war with Spain in 1898 and the ensuing acquisition of a formal overseas empire. In reality, however, the post–Civil War years witnessed an explosion of American industry that made the United States the largest economic power in the world by the 1890s. That explosive growth provided the power and prompted the desire to obtain an overseas empire, a desire acted on long before the events of 1898. This lecture will examine these early efforts at overseas expansion, particularly in Hawaii and the Caribbean, as well as the causes and consequences of the 1898 war with Spain that resulted in the acquisition of a formal colonial empire.

Outline

- I. Although the United States made few formal territorial acquisitions in the 50-year period following the war with Mexico, it clearly established during that time the foundations for the burst of overseas expansion and influence that would occur in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
 - A. As noted in the last lecture, Americans during the 1850s attempted to expand and establish major influence in Central America and the Caribbean.
 - B. Simultaneously, William Henry Seward envisioned a “new empire” for the United States that would encompass all of North America and expand into South America, the Pacific, and Asia.
 1. As secretary of state from 1861–1869, Seward attempted numerous territorial acquisitions in fulfillment of this vision but was thwarted in most of them by the Civil War, Reconstruction, and a reluctant Congress.
 2. His one great success was the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867, a purchase he saw as furthering both territorial expansion over North America and commercial expansion to Asia and the Pacific.
 - C. Such expansion would not culminate for another three decades, but during those years, an enormous burst of industrial growth made the United States the greatest economic power in the world.
 1. That growth would provide the United States with the economic and military power it needed to participate successfully with other great powers in an age of global imperial expansion and competition.
 2. It would also fuel the desire of the United States to expand overseas in order to obtain new markets for the nation’s surplus goods, protection against European encroachments in its sphere of influence, and international prestige and recognition of its status as a world power.
- II. The years 1889–1898 witnessed an intellectual reformulation, a major expansion of the U.S. Navy, and a series of international crises that set the stage for the war and imperial expansion that would follow in 1898–1899.
 - A. The intellectual reformulation focused on the need for expansion overseas to provide a new frontier and fulfill the unique American mission, as well as prevent a loss of liberty at home. Leading figures in this reformulation included Frederick Jackson Turner, Josiah Strong, Brooks Adams, and Alfred Thayer Mahan.
 - B. Mahan’s theories of sea power provided military and geopolitical rationales for the creation of the large naval force that would be needed for overseas expansion.
 - C. The depression of 1893 gave added impetus for overseas expansion and fostered a sense of urgency and “psychic crisis.”
 - D. In the international sphere, Americans living in Hawaii took over the government, declared a republic, and requested annexation to the United States in the early 1890s.
 - E. Simultaneously, the United States almost went to war with Britain when Washington demanded the right to arbitrate a boundary dispute between British Guiana and Venezuela.
 1. Britain’s eventual agreement to American arbitration clearly illustrated the growth in U.S. power that had occurred by this time.
 2. It also served as the foundation for an expansion of the Monroe Doctrine by Secretary of State Richard Olney, who boldly asserted American power.
- III. All this “muscle-flexing” reached a crescendo in 1898 when the United States went to war with Spain over Cuba.
 - A. Contrary to popular mythology, the United States did not go to war to help free the Cuban people from Spanish tyranny and atrocities (as reported and distorted by the “yellow press”), to respond to the insult of the notorious De Lôme letter, or to avenge the destruction of the USS *Maine*.

- B. Rather, Washington demanded that Spain end the chaos and devastation on the island by successfully suppressing the rebellion that had broken out in 1895 or by acceding to rebel demands; by 1898, Washington insisted that Spain agree to U.S. arbitration.
- C. Along with the anti-autonomy riots of early 1898, the De Lôme letter and destruction of the *Maine* were key events in President McKinley's (1843–1901) decision to go to war. These developments offered evidence of Spanish insincerity in negotiations and Spain's inability to control the situation in Cuba.
- D. The United States quickly achieved military victory over the Spanish in this "Splendid Little War," but in the process, McKinley decided to keep the Spanish colonies in the Pacific and the Caribbean that his forces had conquered and obtain congressional approval for the formal annexation of Hawaii.
- E. After bitter debate regarding this apparent break with American tradition via acquisition of a formal overseas colonial empire, the United States first annexed Hawaii and then, in the Treaty of Paris, obtained the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico.
- F. One of the reasons McKinley sought to acquire a formal colonial empire was a series of events then taking place in China. As we will see in the next lecture, McKinley and his successors would create an informal overseas empire to parallel the formal one acquired in the wake of the Spanish-American War.

Suggested Readings:

Beisner, *From the Old Diplomacy to the New, 1865–1900*.

Campbell, *The Transformation of American Foreign Relations, 1865–1900*.

Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*.

LaFeber, *The New Empire*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What were the most important factors in the emergence of the United States as a great power between 1865 and 1899?
2. Why did the United States decide to acquire a formal overseas colonial empire in the late 19th century despite its anti-colonial origins and traditions?

Lecture Eleven

Informal Empire—Roosevelt to Wilson

Scope: Whereas President William McKinley established a formal empire during and after the 1898 war with Spain, his three successors established a related but informal empire in Central America and the Caribbean. That informal empire took the form of U.S. economic dominance throughout the region; the creation of an independent Republic of Panama as a site for a transoceanic canal; protectorate treaties with that new nation, as well as Cuba, Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic, that provided for both American military intervention and financial supervision; and a new corollary to the Monroe Doctrine to justify this behavior. The informal imperialism of the United States also involved major military interventions in Mexico that almost led to another full-scale war between the two nations. This lecture explains how and why this informal empire was created, specifically exploring the actions of the supposedly anti-imperialist Woodrow Wilson, as well the openly imperialist Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft.

Outline

- I. The acquisition of a formal overseas empire led to a massive debate in the Senate and the public at large.
 - A. Those favoring a formal overseas empire won the Senate debate over ratification of the Treaty of Paris in 1899.
 - B. The Philippine insurrection and U.S. military tactics in suppressing that insurrection led to renewed debate and congressional investigations and turned many Americans against additional overseas colonial acquisitions.
- II. The informal American empire was based primarily on trade and U.S. economic power.
 - A. Even before the war with Spain, Americans had extended their massive economic and financial power into Central America, the Caribbean, the Pacific, and Asia.
 - B. Major hopes for future trade expansion focused on China, the greatest untapped market in the world but one that the European imperialist powers appeared ready to carve up by 1898.
 - C. One reason for acquiring a colonial empire in the Pacific had been the desire to establish a series of naval bases from the United States to China to prevent such a partition.
 - D. In 1899, Secretary of State John Hay (1838–1905) issued the famous Open Door Notes regarding China.
 1. These notes affirmed U.S. policies that had actually been in effect for nearly 50 years, but with this official issuance, those policies became virtually canonized.
 2. They also became, according to some scholars, the model for the expansion of U.S. power and influence globally.
- III. In the aftermath of the war with Spain, expansion over the next two decades focused on Central America and the Caribbean.
 - A. The United States desired control of this area for a host of strategic, economic, diplomatic, and ideological reasons, most notably, the desire to build a transoceanic canal and to control the strategic approaches to that canal.
 - B. The primary method for gaining informal control was the creation of five protectorates in the area between 1901 and 1915: Cuba, Panama, Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. Each of these small nations would officially remain independent but would be subject to U.S. economic and financial control and U.S. military intervention under certain circumstances.
 - C. Cuba was the first protectorate to be established and, thus, the model in this regard via the terms of the Platt Amendment of 1901.
 1. The Cubans agreed not to incur debt beyond their means or do anything else that would allow another foreign power to obtain control and to allow both U.S. military intervention to enforce these terms and a sanitation program to wipe out yellow fever.
 2. A year later, a trade treaty allowed Cuban sugar lower U.S. tariff rates—a boon to the Cuban sugar industry but a move that made that industry, and the Cuban economy, more dependent on the United States.
 3. In 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt (1858–1919) ordered U.S. troops back into Cuba to end a revolution and civil war that had broken out.
 - D. Roosevelt also moved to build a transoceanic canal during his presidency, which led to the creation of the Republic of Panama and a second protectorate.
 1. A province of Colombia, Panama was one of two potential routes for such a canal and the site of an earlier canal effort that had failed, organized by a French engineer, Ferdinand de Lesseps.

2. Congress had at first favored the alternative route through Nicaragua, but investors in the old Panama Canal Company convinced both Roosevelt and Congress to negotiate with Colombia for the Panama route via treaty instead.
 3. When the Colombian government rejected the treaty and demanded more money, the investors organized a revolution and a new government, which Roosevelt supported and quickly recognized. A 1903 treaty gave the United States the rights to a canal zone through Panama—and the right to intervene militarily to protect it.
- E. Roosevelt also provided the official rationale for such military interventions with his famous corollary to the Monroe Doctrine.
1. According to Roosevelt, European nations had a right to collect unpaid debts in the Caribbean and Central America by force, but such action could violate the Monroe Doctrine. Under Roosevelt’s corollary, the United States would intervene for the Europeans, militarily as well as financially, to make sure the debts were paid.
 2. By this corollary and his specific actions, Roosevelt played a major role in turning the Caribbean into an American lake.
- IV. A larger number of U.S. financial and military interventions would occur under Roosevelt’s successors, William Howard Taft (1857–1930) and Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924).
- A. Taft preferred “dollar diplomacy” to Roosevelt’s military interventions, while the moralistic and anti-imperialistic Wilson opposed both and promised a major shift in Latin American policy. But Taft would send U.S. troops into Nicaragua and establish financial supervision of that nation between 1909 and 1912, while Wilson would send troops into Haiti and the Dominican Republic, establish financial supervision over the former, and continue financial and military supervision in the other protectorates.
- B. This discrepancy can be partially explained by the existence of the canal, which needed to be defended, and by the fact that Taft and Wilson shared Roosevelt’s desire for control, order, and stability in the area as one way to prevent European intervention.
- C. An additional factor for Wilson was his desire to spread democracy into the area—even if it involved the use of force.
1. Wilson’s first intervention in the Mexican Revolution in 1913–1914 was an effort to overthrow the military dictator Victoriano Huerta, who had overthrown and murdered the constitutionalist reformer Francisco Madero.
 2. This effort alienated all parties in Mexico, though it did aid in Huerta’s overthrow by Venustiano Carranza and Pancho Villa, two of Madero’s lieutenants.
 3. Carranza and Villa then fought for control of the country. When a defeated Villa attacked Americans on both sides of the border, Wilson sent an army into Mexico that soon clashed with Carranza’s forces and left the two nations on the verge of a full-scale war.
 4. War would be narrowly averted and the U.S. Army would be withdrawn, but the entire episode, as well as Wilson’s other actions in Latin America, greatly expanded the informal American empire.

Suggested Readings:

Collin, *Theodore Roosevelt’s Caribbean*.

Gilderhus, *Pan-American Visions*.

Healy, *Drive to Hegemony*.

McCormick, *China Market*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Critics have long charged that an Open Door/free trade policy constitutes “the imperialism of the strong.” Do you agree? Why?
2. Compare and contrast the policies of Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson in Central America and the Caribbean. What differences and similarities do you note?

Lecture Twelve

“The War to End All Wars”

Scope: In 1914, Europe erupted in general war for the first time in nearly 100 years. Despite an official declaration of neutrality, the United States declared war on Germany in April of 1917 for its violation of American neutral rights. President Woodrow Wilson insisted, however, that the United States fight the war for a far larger goal than mere defense of those rights: a new world order, based on collective security instead of the discredited balance of power, to ensure that this would be the “war to end all wars” and that the world would be made “safe for democracy.” This lecture explores, first, Wilson’s efforts from 1914–1917 to avoid entry into the war and why those efforts failed. We then turn to his plan to remake international relations, as enunciated in his famous “Fourteen Points” speech and other addresses. The lecture also examines the relationship between Wilson’s plan and the U.S. military contribution to Allied victory in 1918.

Outline

- I. In the summer of 1914, a massive war began and quickly engulfed all the major powers except the United States.
 - A. On one side stood the Central Powers of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Turkish Empire. On the other side were the Allied Powers of France, Russia, Great Britain, and Japan, joined in 1915 by Italy.
 - B. President Woodrow Wilson quickly declared U.S. neutrality in this conflict and asked Americans to remain neutral in thought as well as action.
 - C. In reality, neither Wilson, nor his advisers, nor the American people were neutral in thought or action; consequently, by 1917, the United States had entered the war on the Allied side.
- II. The official reason for U.S. entry was the violation of U.S. neutral rights by German submarines, but behind this stood a host of other reasons.
 - A. The submarine was a new weapon of war that sank ships without warning, and its use by the Germans violated established international rules of warfare on the high seas.
 - B. The British navy also violated established international rules of warfare through its blockade and ship seizures.
 - C. The United States protested to both powers, but it held the Germans to “strict accountability” on the grounds that British violations affected American property, whereas German violations affected American lives.
 1. This position almost led to war in the spring of 1915, when a German U-boat torpedoed the British passenger liner *Lusitania*, killing 1,198 people, including 128 Americans.
 2. The crisis was temporarily resolved in the following year, when Germany, in the Arabic pledge, agreed not to sink unresisting merchant or passenger ships.
 - D. The Germans found Wilson’s position hypocritical and had agreed to his demands only on a temporary basis. From Berlin’s perspective, Wilson’s “lives versus property” distinction and ensuing demands ignored numerous critical facts:
 1. The Germans suffered loss of life as a result of British violations of neutral rights.
 2. The *Lusitania* had carried munitions and was, thus, a legitimate target. The Germans had also warned Americans against travel on Allied ships.
 3. Allied merchant ships were armed and could easily destroy the fragile submarine if it surfaced and gave warning.
 - E. American trade with the Allies had more than tripled by 1916 and had led the Wilson administration to allow major loans to the Allies so that they could continue to purchase American war material. As a result, the United States had replaced Britain as the financial capital of the world.
 - F. Furthermore, Wilson and most of his key advisers were pro-Allied in their sympathies. Only Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan (1860–1925) was truly neutral, and he resigned in protest over Wilson’s harsh stand in the *Lusitania* crisis.
- III. Wilson did not want to enter the war and even attempted, on numerous occasions, to mediate a negotiated settlement (a “peace without victory” as he stated in early 1917). But his own blindness to the one-sidedness of his neutrality led him into a diplomatic corner from which he could not escape by April of 1917.
 - A. On January 31, 1917, Germany announced the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare against all ships—neutral as well as belligerent—in a final gamble to starve Britain into submission and win the war before Germany itself collapsed from exhaustion.

- B. Believing this strategy would lead to an American declaration of war, Berlin sought to keep the United States preoccupied in the Western Hemisphere through a military alliance with Mexico. Revelation of this effort with the publication of the “Zimmermann Telegram” in March 1917 infuriated previously neutral segments of the public and made Germany appear even more of a threat.
 - C. The overthrow of the Russian czar in the same month and the establishment of a representative government in that country made it appear that this was indeed a war of democracy versus autocracy, as British propaganda in the United States had long claimed.
 - D. By this time, Germany had also begun to sink U.S. merchant ships.
- IV. As a result of these factors, Wilson reluctantly asked for and received from Congress, in April, a declaration of war against Germany.
- A. Rather than limit his war aims to the defense of U.S. neutral rights, however, Wilson argued that the nation must fight to “make the world safe for democracy,” to remake the entire international order so that another world war could never occur—a reassertion of the old American “mission” concept to remake the world in its own image.
 - B. To maximize his voice with the Allied powers and deal with the military crisis at hand, Wilson decided to fight the Germans on land in Europe, as well as on the high seas. The United States established a military draft, sent to Europe a large army under General John J. Pershing, and insisted that its forces remain separate from the British and French armies.
 - C. In his famous “Fourteen Points” speech of January 1918 and in other public statements, Wilson sketched out the essentials of his new world order, which would be based on the principles of national self-determination, democracy, and collective security instead of the failed balance of power.
 - D. U.S. armed forces played a major role in halting the final German offensive in the spring of 1918 and in supporting the Allied counteroffensive that led to the German request for an armistice.
 - E. Historians still debate whether the United States should or could have avoided entry into World War I. What is clear is that Wilson’s policies did lead to U.S. entry into the war, despite his desire to avoid that outcome, and that he intended a crusade to transform the international order. The peace negotiations in Paris would determine whether or not he would succeed.

Suggested Readings:

Coogan, *The End of Neutrality*.

Gregory, *The Origins of American Intervention in the First World War*.

Link, *Woodrow Wilson*.

May, *The World War and American Isolation, 1914–1917*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Could or should the United States have avoided entry into the First World War? Why?
2. If you answered yes to the first question, what alternative policies could or should Wilson have pursued? If you answered no, do you believe Wilson’s policies were appropriate and correct?

Lecture Thirteen

The Peace Treaty and Wilson's Heritage

Scope: Wilson attempted to create his new world order at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, but he was largely unsuccessful. Although he managed to establish a collective security organization in the League of Nations, he did so only by compromising many of his previously enunciated principles. The resulting peace treaty alienated numerous groups and planted the seeds for conflicts that would erupt throughout the rest of the century. To make matters worse, Wilson then failed to obtain Senate ratification of his peace treaty and, with it, U.S. membership in the League. This lecture explores how and why Wilson was forced into so many compromises in Paris and why he failed to obtain Senate agreement to join the League. Despite all the failures analyzed in this and the preceding lecture, Wilson continues to rank as one of the most important and influential statesmen in the history of America's rise to superpower status. This lecture concludes with an explanation of why that is the case.

Outline

- I.** By the time of the armistice in November of 1918, Wilson's statements promising a new world order had made him the moral leader of the Allies. But the other Allied governments and their leaders did not agree with his plans to remake the international order. Neither did his domestic political opponents.
 - A.** The Allies wanted a punitive peace and did not believe in national self-determination or collective security as alternatives to the existing order.
 - B.** Knowing this, Wilson had insisted on maintaining the U.S. forces in France as a separate entity during the war to increase his bargaining power at the peace conference.
 - C.** In addition, Wilson decided to attend the conference in person.
 - D.** This decision infuriated Republicans, who had just regained control of the Senate; they argued that Wilson could not speak for the U.S. government. His refusal to appoint any high-ranking Republicans to his delegation only angered them further and promised serious trouble for any treaty he negotiated in Paris.
- II.** Numerous fundamental issues would have to be decided at the Paris Peace Conference.
 - A.** The most obvious question was whether Germany should be treated harshly or leniently.
 - B.** The negotiators would also have to decide what to do with Germany's allies and with Wilson's peace program, as enunciated in the Fourteen Points and other speeches.
 - C.** Another important question was how to deal with the radical Bolshevik party in Russia, which had seized power in late 1917 and established a "dictatorship of the proletariat."
 - D.** The negotiators in Paris decided not to admit Germany or her allies to the negotiations, to keep the negotiations secret, and to have the important determinations made by the major victorious powers—all violations of the first of Wilson's Fourteen Points: open covenants, openly arrived at.
- III.** Wilson soon found himself at odds with his colleagues in Paris on most issues.
 - A.** Wilson was most interested in establishing the principle of collective security through the creation of the League of Nations, but his fellow negotiators were most interested in dividing the spoils from their enemies according to the secret treaties they had signed during the war.
 - B.** While Wilson wished to support the new democratic German government and integrate it into his new international order, his allies wished to weaken Germany through disarmament and the demand for punitive reparations.
 - C.** Wilson eventually agreed to a compromise: Germany would not be dismembered but would lose substantial territory in the east and west, as well as its overseas colonies; would pay substantial reparations; and would agree to severe limits on the size of its armed forces.
 - D.** Wilson also had serious conflicts with Italy over the area known as Fiume and with Japan over its demand for a racial equality clause in the League Charter (which he opposed) and its acquisition of German possessions in the Pacific and China.
 - E.** Conflict also erupted over the correct strategy for handling Bolshevik Russia. Although his allies wished to crush the Bolsheviks by military force, Wilson argued that they could not succeed, that the anti-Bolshevik forces in Russia were reactionary, and that continued Allied support for them would only drive the Russian people into Bolshevik arms.

- IV. The final peace treaties were clearly a compromise between the conflicting views of the major powers and their leaders.
- A. The Treaty of Versailles established the League of Nations and left Germany as a nation but deprived Berlin of its overseas colonies and territories. It also divided East Prussia from the rest of the country via the so-called Polish Corridor, established temporary occupation and permanent demilitarization of the Rhineland, severely limited the German military, and forced Germany to assume responsibility for the war and pay reparations to the Allies.
 - B. The treaties with the other Central Powers ratified the breakup of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires and the loss of territory by Bulgaria and Russia, which resulted in the creation of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Poland, as well as Austria and Hungary, as separate states.
 - C. The territory Russia had lost to Germany in the separate peace of 1918 became part of the newly re-created Poland, the Baltic states, Finland, and an expanded Rumania.
 - D. Americans tend to see compromise as the “best of both worlds,” but in this case, it may have been the worst of both—on multiple levels.
 - 1. Germany was punished severely but not destroyed, creating both the possibility and the desire for revenge that would lead to another world war in 1939.
 - 2. A number of small successor states to the existing multinational empires were created—states that were weak, unstable, and indefensible.
 - 3. Soviet Russia was punished and isolated but, again, not destroyed. This situation reinforced that nation’s hostility toward the capitalist world, removed Russia as a potential counterweight to Germany, and created the environment for a highly dangerous Russo-German rapprochement.
 - 4. Two of the victors, Italy and Japan, were sufficiently angered to become alienated from their allies and join Germany in World War II.
 - 5. The artificial entities created in the former Ottoman Empire made the Middle East today the most dangerous and unstable area in the world.
- V. Although not solely to blame, Wilson bears a major responsibility for this disastrous peace and an even greater responsibility for the Senate’s refusal to ratify the treaty—a refusal that some argue doomed both the treaty and the League and guaranteed another world war.
- A. Wilson clearly realized that the treaty was flawed but believed that the League, with its principle of collective security, could deal with these flaws.
 - B. The Senate disagreed and refused to ratify the treaty. This refusal was based on constitutional issues (legislative versus executive powers), partisan politics, and personal animosities. But it was also based on real differences of opinion regarding the principle of collective security as embedded in the League of Nations Covenant.
- VI. Despite the defeat of the treaty, Wilson clearly ranks as one of the most important figures in the rise of the United States to superpower status.
- A. Under Wilson, the United States abandoned its century-old isolation from European politics and wars and attempted to remake international relations.
 - B. For these reasons, Wilson is often ranked as a great or near-great president.
 - C. His presidency may be grossly overrated, however, given his failure in all his important foreign policy goals.
 - D. He also is responsible for the largest number of military interventions by an American president—most of which were failures.
 - E. Finally, he reinforced the belief in an American mission to remake the world, a belief that some leaders, then and now, consider to be grossly unrealistic, incredibly arrogant, and highly dangerous.

Suggested Readings:

Cooper, *Breaking the Heart of the World*.

Levin, *Woodrow Wilson and World Politics*.

MacMillan, *Paris 1919*.

Mayer, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Would you have supported the policies of Woodrow Wilson or Allied leaders Clemenceau, Lloyd George, and Orlando at Paris? Why?
2. Does Wilson deserve his status in most presidential polls as a great or near-great president, or is he overrated?

Lecture Fourteen

Interwar Isolationism and Internationalism

Scope: Early and still-popular interpretations of U.S. foreign policy during the 1920s and 1930s focused on its supposedly “isolationist” character. Newer approaches challenge this “legend of isolationism” and argue that the United States pursued a series of policies during these years that were anything but isolationist. Better described as “independent internationalism,” these policies helped to establish a new and effective international order during the 1920s. In the process, they further expanded American power and influence in the world, often by informal means. This lecture examines those policies and assesses their relative successes and failures during the interwar years.

Outline

- I. Contrary to popular belief, the Senate’s refusal to ratify the Treaty of Versailles did not usher in an era of disastrous isolationism for the United States.
 - A. Admittedly, the United States also refused to join the World Court, to support a large military establishment, or to join any European alliances.
 - B. Simultaneously, however, it negotiated and signed numerous arms limitation treaties and other political agreements and remained active in Latin America.
 - C. It was also deeply involved economically and culturally in Europe and elsewhere. U.S. economic power underpinned the entire international structure that was created after the war, while the new medium of film helped to spread U.S. culture and influence throughout the world.
- II. The major emphasis in U.S. foreign policy during this era was on using the nation’s enormous economic and financial power to maintain global peace and stability.
 - A. U.S. economic and financial power had grown significantly during and after the war. By 1925, the United States produced nearly half of the world’s industrial goods and was both the largest exporter and the largest foreign investor in the world.
 - B. Simultaneously, a major expansion of American cultural influence took place, primarily as a result of the new film industry.
 - C. American policymakers, especially Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover (1874–1964), encouraged economic, financial, and cultural expansion overseas, both for U.S. economic growth and for world prosperity and peace.
 - D. The U.S.-sponsored Dawes Plan of 1924 serves as a classic example of U.S. economic diplomacy and its ability to resolve multiple issues.
 - E. The overall results of this U.S. economic diplomacy included prosperity in both Europe and the United States, a de facto connection of reparations to war debt payments, and the creation of a peaceful integrationist approach to Germany by the Allies and by Germany toward its former enemies.
- III. The United States also took the lead in a series of disarmament treaties.
 - A. The aftermath of World War I proved a dynamic time for the United States and the world peace movement, highlighted by a major U.S. effort at arms limitation and the elimination of military conflicts between the great powers by an international legal/treaty system.
 - B. One of the greatest successes of this movement was the 1921–1922 Washington Conference and the ensuing Four-Power, Five-Power, and Nine-Power Washington Treaties. Largely the work of U.S. Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes (1862–1948), the treaties ended a growing naval race and great-power clash while establishing the basis for more than a decade of peace in the Pacific. All five powers agreed to a series of limitations on their warships, including scrapping of older ships, limits of size of new vessels and guns, and tonnage limits on the total size of each of their navies. Those tonnage limits would establish a ratio—i.e., British and U.S. fleets at an upper limit of 500,000 tons, Japan at 300,000, France and Italy at 175,000.
 1. The Five-Power Naval Limitation Treaty limited the size and number of capital ships in the world’s major navies and established a 10-year holiday on new ship construction.
 2. The Nine-Power Treaty affirmed international support for the Open Door policy in China.
 3. The Four-Power Treaty abrogated the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and pledged the major powers to respect one another’s rights in the Pacific.
 - C. A U.S.-initiated conference in Geneva to deal with smaller naval craft failed in 1927, but a second effort in London in 1930 was successful.

- D. The most famous but least important treaty within this system was the 1928 Kellogg-Briand Pact outlawing war as an instrument of national policy. This bizarre treaty had no enforcement mechanisms and little if any impact—save a Nobel Peace Prize for an American secretary of state, fewer formal declarations of war, legal grounds for the Nürnberg war crimes trials after World War II, and an undeserved bad name for the entire treaty structure of the era.
- IV. The interwar years also witnessed a major shift in U.S. policy toward Latin America as old military occupations came to an end and the United States renounced the right to intervention that it had claimed in the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine.
- A. Although Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882–1945) would be credited with this new policy, which he labeled the “Good Neighbor” Policy, his three Republican predecessors actually began it by removing U.S. troops from some of the protectorates and questioning the legality and the wisdom of the Roosevelt Corollary.
 - B. This policy shift resulted from the lack of any outside threat to the area, combined with the recognition that U.S. military interventions were causing Latin American nationalism to turn violent.
 - C. The new policy involved continued U.S. control of Latin America, albeit indirectly and through such informal means as increased U.S. investments, the training of indigenous forces to keep “order,” and support for dictators who promised and delivered stability.
 - D. Washington showed the greatest flexibility in its relations with Mexico, where serious disputes over the revolutionary government’s nationalization of foreign property were resolved.
 - E. Washington’s ability to retain control through indirect force was simultaneously illustrated in Cuba, where in 1933–1934, it helped to overthrow an “undesirable” leftist government and establish the long-term Batista dictatorship.
 - F. The overall policy was an improvement over the previous direct military interventions, but it would eventually result in anti-American revolutions, most notably, Fidel Castro’s revolution in Cuba.
- V. Although many scholars still condemn U.S. foreign policy as a whole during the era as isolationist and “oblivious to reality,” numerous historians now maintain that U.S. isolation and naïveté have been vastly overstated.
- A. A “mood” of isolation may have kept the United States out of the League of Nations and the World Court, but the nation was otherwise deeply involved in international affairs.
 - B. This involvement was based on the enormous economic and financial power of the United States, which then extended into the cultural, political, and military realms.
 - C. The United States did not maintain a large armed force during this period because it did not need one. It was not threatened by any other power, and it discovered new and more effective ways to exercise its influence.
 - D. If any criticism is to be leveled at U.S. foreign policy during this era, it is that it lulled the American public into a false sense of security and an unrealistic belief that peace and prosperity would last forever.

Suggested Readings:

Braeman, “Power and Diplomacy.”

Cohen, *Empire without Tears*.

Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion*.

Hoff, *American Business and Foreign Policy, 1920–1933*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How isolationist would you say the United States was in the years following World War I?
2. How successful were the policies pursued by Washington after World War I in achieving U.S. goals in the world?

Lecture Fifteen

U.S. Entry into World War II

Scope: The Great Depression wrecked the international order that the United States had helped to create after World War I, as well as undermining the global economy. One major result was the rise of highly aggressive and militaristic regimes in Germany, Italy, and Japan, which soon allied as the Axis Powers. By the late 1930s, these powers had initiated full-scale war in Europe, Africa, and Asia. Despite the passage of a series of Neutrality Acts designed to preclude U.S. entry into another war, the United States decided in 1940–1941 to aid materially those nations fighting the Axis Powers. By the fall of 1941, it was fighting an undeclared naval war with Nazi Germany in the Atlantic to deliver that material aid and had instituted major economic sanctions against Japan. By December, it had been attacked at Pearl Harbor and was at war with both powers. This lecture explores how and why the United States shifted from neutrality to active support of nations at war with the Axis and how these policies led to full-scale war by the end of 1941. In the process, we will also look at the massive debate that took place in the country over proper U.S. policy in this crisis and the long-running controversy over the Pearl Harbor attack.

Outline

- I. The Great Depression destroyed the foundation of the peace structure that the United States had created and led to the rise of highly aggressive dictatorships in many countries. By the mid-1930s, three of those dictatorships—Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and a militarist Japan—had united as the Axis Powers and would soon plunge the world into war.
 - A. As war erupted in Asia and threatened to erupt in Europe, the American people and Congress concluded that U.S. entry into World War I had been an avoidable mistake that should not be repeated. Between 1936 and 1939, Congress passed a series of Neutrality Acts designed to outlaw the behavior that it believed had led the country into war in 1917.
 - B. Preoccupied with his New Deal to combat the Great Depression and unwilling to risk alienating any domestic supporters, President Roosevelt signed these measures despite his opposition to many of their terms.
 - C. When war broke out in Europe in 1939, however, Roosevelt made clear that he could not and would not ask the American people to remain neutral in thought as well as action, given the nature of the Nazi regime. Instead, he requested and received repeal of the arms embargo so that Britain and France could purchase war material on a cash-and-carry basis.
- II. The German conquest of France and the rest of Western Europe in the spring of 1940 ended the belief that arms sales would be sufficient to preclude a German victory and led to a revolution in American thinking and behavior.
 - A. A triumphant Nazi Germany appeared to many Americans to be a mortal threat to American security should its last remaining adversary, Great Britain, fall.
 - B. President Roosevelt requested and received from Congress massive defense expenditures and the institution of the first peacetime draft in U.S. history.
 - C. After his reelection to an unprecedented third term, Roosevelt proposed that the United States agree to lend or lease war material to Great Britain free of charge.
 1. This proposal led to debate in both Congress and the nation at large. Opponents argued that the United States should maintain its traditional isolation from European wars, while supporters of the president argued, as he did, that Britain was the first line of U.S. defense.
 2. After heated debate, Congress passed the Lend-Lease Act in March of 1941, thereby making the United States an unofficial belligerent in the war.
 - D. Simultaneously, Roosevelt's military advisers reached agreement with their British counterparts on a global military strategy in the event of U.S. entry into the war.
 - E. Throughout the rest of 1941, lend-lease was extended to China and to the Soviet Union after Hitler invaded that nation in June.
 - F. Roosevelt extended the hemispheric security zone he had previously announced to include Greenland and Iceland and ordered U.S. naval patrols west of the latter. In August, he met with Winston Churchill (1874–1965) off the coast of Newfoundland, where they issued the famous Atlantic Charter, enunciating the postwar world they wished to create.
 1. By October, U.S. naval patrols had come into armed conflict with German U-boats. As commander in chief, the president ordered the navy to “shoot on sight” at U-boats.

2. The president also requested repeal of the Neutrality Acts so that armed U.S. merchant ships could carry lend-lease supplies across the Atlantic. When Congress agreed, the United States found itself in a full-scale, if undeclared, shooting war with German submarines in the Atlantic.

III. War officially came to the United States in the Pacific on December 7, 1941, with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

- A. The United States had long opposed the Japanese invasion of China and, by 1940, had begun to apply economic sanctions against Japan.
- B. Japan responded with the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy, in effect, threatening the United States with a two-front war should it continue to oppose Tokyo's conquests.
- C. Japan relied on American oil and steel to make war, but it decided to seek economic self-sufficiency by conquering the European and U.S. resource-rich colonies in Southeast Asia.
- D. To protect its invasion forces from a naval attack on its eastern flank, Japan also decided to launch a surprise naval air attack against the U.S. Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor.
- E. Hitler followed three days later with a declaration of war against the United States. With this act, he turned the undeclared U.S.-German naval war in the Atlantic into a full and declared war and joined what had been separate regional wars in Europe and the Far East.

IV. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor remains highly controversial and had significant consequences.

- A. Some conspiracy theorists argue that the attack was masterminded by Hitler, while others assert that it was masterminded by Roosevelt as a "back door" to full-scale war in Europe. Though neither theory stands up to historical scrutiny, they retain popularity today.
- B. On the surface, the attack was a brilliant success that allowed Japan to achieve all its military objectives over the next few months. However, it also guaranteed Japan an unlimited, total war with the United States that it could not win.
- C. Similarly, the German declaration of war precipitated full-scale American involvement in the war that would doom Germany to defeat.
- D. The two events would also lead a revolution in American thinking about the country's relationship to the world—a revolution that would play a major role in the continued rise of the United States, both during and after the war, to a position of unprecedented world power.

Suggested Readings:

Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932–1945*, prologue and chs. 1–11.

Doenecke and Wilz, *From Isolation to War, 1931–1941*.

Heinrichs, *Threshold of War*.

Reynolds, *From Munich to Pearl Harbor*.

Russett, *No Clear and Present Danger*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Could or should war with Germany or Japan have been avoided in 1941? Why?
2. Did Roosevelt lead, follow, or manipulate public opinion regarding war between 1939 and 1941?

Lecture Sixteen

World War II Diplomacy and the FDR Legacy

Scope: World War II was a massive global struggle in which the United States fought as part of a great Allied coalition. That coalition was dominated by its three most important members: Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States. By 1945, the three had achieved total military victory over their Axis enemies. This lecture examines the nature of their successful coalition war effort, with particular emphasis on their conflicting military and political interests and the efforts of their leaders—Winston Churchill, Joseph Stalin (1879–1953), and Franklin Roosevelt—to compromise on those differences in order to fight an effective coalition war. The lecture also offers an assessment of Roosevelt, one of the most important and controversial presidents in U.S. history, as a diplomat and war leader.

Outline

- I. The formal military alliance against the Axis Powers was announced to the world in the Declaration by United Nations on January 1, 1942.
 - A. The signatories pledged to fight together, not to sign a separate peace with the Axis nations with which each was at war, and to establish a peaceful and just postwar world based on the principles of the Atlantic Charter.
 - B. Simultaneously, Churchill, Roosevelt, and their advisers meeting in Washington established a “special” Anglo-American relationship within this alliance.
- II. Although the key members of what Churchill labeled the “Grand Alliance” agreed on certain basics, they also had numerous and serious points of disagreement.
 - A. Strategically, they all agreed that Germany was the most dangerous of the Axis Powers and, therefore, had to be defeated before Japan. They also agreed to the creation of a postwar world that would never again see conflict on this scale. They disagreed sharply, however, on how to accomplish these goals.
 - B. The strategic disagreement pitted Great Britain against the Soviet Union and the United States.
 1. Great Britain favored a peripheral approach to the military defeat of Germany that would focus on blockade, aerial bombardment, and action in the Mediterranean.
 2. The Soviet Union demanded a more direct approach via an Anglo-American invasion of northern France from across the English Channel to force the Germans into a two-front war. The United States agreed with the direct Soviet approach.
 - C. The disagreement over the postwar world was equally serious, if not more so.
 1. Great Britain desired a return to the prewar balance of power and the world that had existed before the rise of Hitler.
 2. The Soviet Union called instead for the permanent weakening of Germany, its own retention of the areas in Eastern Europe it had gained as a result of its 1939 pact with Nazi Germany, and “friendly” governments throughout the rest of Eastern Europe.
 3. The United States believed that either approach would lead to another world war. Officially, it pressed for a peace based on the principles of the 1941 Atlantic Charter—most notably, collective security. Unofficially, Roosevelt was more realistic and saw the need for a continuation of the Grand Alliance into the postwar era.
 - D. Further, Stalin and Churchill desired political and territorial agreements while the war was in progress, while Roosevelt insisted that all such agreements be postponed until the end of the war.
 - E. The primary method of resolving these Allied disagreements was the summit conference. Roosevelt, Churchill, and their key advisers would meet on 10 separate occasions during the war; Churchill and Stalin would meet twice; and all three would meet twice.
- III. Strategic disagreement dominated Allied relations from 1941 through 1943.
 - A. In the spring of 1942, Roosevelt “promised” the Soviets a cross-channel attack, but Churchill soon convinced him that such an attack could not succeed and that Anglo-American forces should instead invade French North Africa in 1942 and postpone the channel crossing until 1943. At the same time, Japanese military successes led the Americans to launch a counteroffensive against them in violation of the Germany-first principle.
 - B. It soon became apparent that both the North African and South Pacific campaigns would last much longer than originally anticipated and that German U-boats continued to pose a serious threat in the Atlantic. Consequently, the channel could not be safely crossed in 1943. Instead, Churchill proposed continuing in the Mediterranean in 1943 with invasions first of Sicily, then, Italy.

- C. Roosevelt and his military advisers agreed but only on condition that the channel be crossed in 1944 and that more forces be allocated to the Pacific. Partially to reassure Stalin in light of this further delay, Roosevelt publicly enunciated the Allied policy of unconditional surrender.
 - D. The dispute was not resolved until the first “Big Three” meeting at Tehran in late November of 1943, where Roosevelt and Stalin outvoted Churchill and forced agreement to cross the channel in the spring of 1944.
- IV. As the strategic disagreement dominated Allied relations during the years 1941–1943, so political disputes dominated Allied relations during the remaining years of the war.
- A. By late 1943, the Big Three had theoretically agreed to the unconditional surrender and tripartite occupation of Germany, as well as a new postwar League of Nations.
 - B. However, the Big Three had not reached any formal agreement on Soviet boundaries or the future of Eastern Europe, particularly Poland, where the questions of boundaries and governments remained hotly disputed.
 - C. In October of 1944, Churchill flew to Moscow to discuss the future of Eastern Europe and signed a temporary spheres-of-influence agreement with Stalin, thereby forcing Roosevelt to agree to the postwar territorial discussions to be held at the Yalta Conference in 1945.
 - 1. Yalta had developed a notorious reputation as the conference in which a dying Roosevelt naïvely appeased Stalin and gave away half of the world to the Soviet dictator, thereby guaranteeing the Cold War that followed World War II.
 - 2. Roosevelt was indeed dying, but he gave away nothing that he actually possessed in February of 1945. Instead, he signed a series of agreements with Stalin and Churchill that were designed to ensure continued Allied collaboration.
 - 3. These agreements were compromises and, overall, were highly favorable to the United States, given its actual military position at the time.
- V. Though Roosevelt died only two months after the Yalta Conference, his legacy after more than 12 years in office was significant—and quite controversial.
- A. In the early years of the Cold War, he was sharply condemned for a host of supposed faults, including excessive caution, general military unpreparedness, and the appeasement of Joseph Stalin.
 - B. In reality, the United States under Roosevelt played a major role in creating and maintaining one of the most successful wartime coalitions in history, totally defeated its enemies, suffered the lowest relative death rate of any of the major belligerents, and emerged at war’s end as the most powerful nation the world had ever seen.
 - C. Roosevelt had numerous faults and failures but not the ones previously mentioned and traditionally associated with him.
 - 1. He dangerously expanded executive power, primarily through his broad definition of what he could do as commander in chief of the armed forces, both before and after Pearl Harbor.
 - 2. He failed to educate the public about the realities of international affairs and the limits of U.S. power vis-à-vis its Soviet ally, even though he well understood those realities and limits.

Suggested Readings:

Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932–1945*, chs. 12–16 and epilogue.

Edmonds, *The Big Three*.

Kimball, *Forged in War*.

Reynolds, Kimball, and Chubarian, eds., *Allies at War*.

Smith, *American Diplomacy during the Second World War, 1941–1945*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What were the most notable successes and failures of the World War II Grand Alliance?
2. What were Franklin D. Roosevelt’s contributions to the rise of the United States as a superpower from 1933–1945? Does he deserve his reputation as one of the nation’s greatest presidents?

Lecture Seventeen

Origins of the Cold War

Scope: Both the United States and the Soviet Union emerged from World War II with enormously expanded military power. With the common Axis enemies that had previously united them now defeated and possessing very different interests, the two quickly came into serious conflict on a host of issues and in different parts of the world. These conflicts were exacerbated by their very different ideologies and by the fact that the two nations confronted each other across what was, in effect, a postwar global power vacuum. This lecture examines the resulting rapid shift from World War II allies to Cold War adversaries and the key American policies that were enunciated during that shift: the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and containment. It also deals with the formation of NATO—the first U.S. peacetime military alliance in 150 years.

Outline

- I. The rapid breakdown of the World War II Grand Alliance had numerous long-term and immediate causes.
 - A. As with most coalitions in history, that between the United States and the Soviet Union had formed only because of the common threat they faced; with the Axis defeat in 1945, that threat ceased to exist, and the two nations rapidly reverted to their prewar hostility.
 - B. The hostility between the United States and the Soviet Union had been based on both major ideological differences and real conflicts of interest resulting from the expansionist history of both nations. Indeed, the global conflict that now ensued had been predicted more than a century earlier and had actually begun many years before World War II forced the two nations into alliance.
 - C. The possibility of conflict was increased by the fact that the United States and the Soviet Union had emerged from World War II as the only remaining powers and faced each other across a worldwide power vacuum.
 - D. The potential for hostility was also increased by the personalities of the two leaders, Joseph Stalin and Harry Truman (1884–1972), and by the sharply conflicting definitions of postwar security that each held—definitions deeply affected by the horrendous war their two nations had just endured.
 - E. Even before Germany surrendered, fissures in the alliance began to emerge, with the Americans accusing Stalin of breaking the Yalta Accords and Stalin accusing the Americans of trying to negotiate a separate peace with the Germans in northern Italy.
 - F. Suspicions were increased during the July summit conference at Potsdam, as differences over postwar policies further emerged amidst sharp language.
 - G. The controversial American decision to drop two atomic bombs on Japan further fueled Soviet suspicion. This decision was relayed to Stalin at Potsdam in only the vaguest terms and preceded by a Churchill-Roosevelt wartime agreement to maintain an Anglo-American monopoly over any atomic weapon developed during the war.
- II. Conflicts and hostile rhetoric continued to escalate once World War II officially ended.
 - A. In September of 1945, the London foreign ministers' conference ended in failure.
 - B. Matters improved at the December foreign ministers' conference in Moscow, during which the Allies were able to agree on peace treaties for Germany's wartime satellites.
 - C. In February and March, however, Stalin and Churchill each issued hostile public statements warning of present and future conflict.
 - D. Simultaneously, Iran, with American backing, complained publicly of the Soviets' refusal to evacuate the northern part of the country as they had previously agreed to do.
 - E. Hostilities quickly escalated during the spring and summer of 1946.
 - 1. The Paris Peace Conference became deadlocked, and the Americans halted reparations payments from their occupation zone in Germany.
 - 2. Simultaneously, the State Department discovered a "lost" 1945 Soviet request for a multibillion-dollar loan that linked the agreement to Soviet behavior in Eastern Europe, a connection that the Soviet Union rejected.
 - 3. The Soviets also rejected the U.S. Baruch Plan for international control of atomic energy and pushed ahead with the development of their own nuclear weapons.
 - 4. Moscow resumed its demands on Turkey for a revision of the treaty governing the Dardanelles, demands that the United States forcefully opposed.

- F. By this time, each side had come to view the other as hostile and dangerous.
 - 1. In his famous “Long Telegram,” Soviet expert George F. Kennan (1904–2005) maintained that the U.S.S.R. was inherently hostile toward the West for internal and historical reasons and that no compromises by the United States could alter this hostility.
 - 2. Soviet Ambassador to the United States Nikolai Novikov wrote a similar “long telegram” in September, arguing that internal capitalist contradictions accounted for hostile American behavior and warning that another world war was possible.
 - 3. In effect, a “mirror image” was being created, in which each side viewed the other side as aggressive and its own moves as defensive.

III. The official “declarations” of Cold War occurred in 1947 with a series of documents and moves.

- A. President Truman, in the Truman Doctrine, requested and received from Congress funds to assist the Greek government in its war against rebel Greek Communists. Truman also requested and received assistance for Turkey in resisting Soviet pressure on the grounds that U.S. policy should be to “support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure.”
- B. In the Marshall Plan, the United States sought to use its economic power to counter the popularity of local communist parties in Western Europe, which it viewed as stalking horses for Soviet imperialism, and to rebuild the economies of Western Europe in an integrated manner.
- C. Kennan’s containment policy provided the overall rationale for these policies—and for all U.S. policies in the ensuing Cold War.
 - 1. Kennan maintained in his famous 1947 article, as he had in his 1946 Long Telegram, that Soviet aggressiveness and hostility to the West were internally motivated and could not be changed by American concessions. Instead, he now argued, the United States must act to contain Soviet aggression.
 - 2. If successful, such containment would force either a mellowing or the destruction of the Soviet system.

IV. Tensions quickly escalated and reached a critical stage in 1948–1949.

- A. Although they were invited to participate in the Marshall Plan, the Soviets rejected the offer as an attempt to destroy their power in Eastern Europe. Instead, they consolidated their hold, as Kennan had predicted, culminating in a Communist coup in Czechoslovakia in early 1948.
- B. The Western Europeans accepted the offer of participation in the Marshall Plan, albeit on condition that the United States provide military protection against any Soviet moves against them. The United States agreed, and in 1949, this would lead to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the first peacetime military alliance in U.S. history.
- C. The Marshall Plan required the rebuilding of the German economy. Combined with the continued inability of the Allied Powers to reach agreement on a combined policy for the future of Germany, the necessity of German economic restructuring led Britain, France, and the United States to move toward the formation of a separate West German government.
 - 1. In an effort to prevent this move, Stalin blockaded the western zones of Berlin, thereby precipitating a major crisis and war scare.
 - 2. The blockade failed when the Americans responded with a major and highly successful airlift.
 - 3. The blockade also boomeranged, in that it sped up the formation of a West German government and NATO.
- D. The Cold War had thus begun. Although American policies were designed to halt Soviet expansion, they actually led to an enormous expansion of U.S. power in this new bipolar world. In effect, the United States was fully asserting, on a global scale, the power it had previously accumulated.

Suggested Readings:

Gaddis, *We Now Know*.

Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*.

Paterson, *On Every Front*.

Zubok and Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin’s Cold War*.

Questions to Consider:

- 1. To what extent was Soviet-American conflict after World War II the result of (a) conflicting ideologies and political systems, (b) conflicting interests and definitions of security, (c) personalities, and (d) the international situation in 1945?
- 2. In what ways were U.S. policies in the early years of the Cold War a major departure from traditional American policies? In what ways were they not?

Lecture Eighteen

Cold War Turns Hot—Asia and the Korean War

Scope: Despite a series of war scares in the late 1940s, the Cold War did not result in any “hot” war in Europe. Indeed, the Soviet-American conflict ironically resulted in one of the longest periods of peace in the modern history of Europe. But hot war did break out in Asia, as the Cold War mixed on that continent with both internal and anti-colonial conflicts to create a host of armed clashes, particularly in China, Indochina, and Korea. This lecture explores the American decision to intervene in these conflicts, most notably and massively, in Korea in 1950 to prevent a Communist North Korean victory over South Korea. The lecture also highlights the significant consequences of that military intervention, including the ensuing Communist Chinese intervention and threat of World War III, the Truman-MacArthur civil-military crisis, the anti-communist hysteria in the United States, and the full acceptance and implementation of a greatly expanded and militarized global containment policy. These developments would, in turn, have a significant impact on the next two decades of American foreign policy.

Outline

- I. Despite the enormous successes of U.S. policies in Europe, many Americans believed in late 1949 and early 1950 that the United States was losing the Cold War and in peril. This conclusion stemmed from a series of disturbing events during that time.
 - A. One of the most notable of these was the Communist success in the Chinese civil war.
 1. This civil war had actually begun in the 1920s and continued during the 1930s, when the Japanese invasion led to a fragile truce between the Nationalists under Chiang Kai-shek and the Communists under Mao Tse-tung.
 2. The United States had attempted to avert hostilities, sending General Marshall to China in late 1945 as a special presidential representative and mediator. But his efforts ended in failure, and full-scale civil war erupted. By 1949, Mao had won and established the People’s Republic of China, while Chiang had fled to the island of Taiwan.
 3. Chiang’s defeat came as a tremendous shock to most Americans, who had been led to believe that he was the George Washington of China and who expected that China, under his leadership, would emerge from the war as an ally.
 4. Chiang’s defeat did not come as a surprise to the Truman administration, however, which had been consistently warned during and after World War II of Nationalist weakness and corruption.
 5. Conceivably, the administration was willing, at this time, to consider establishing diplomatic relations with Communist China. In 1950, however, Mao signed a treaty of alliance with Stalin that would forestall diplomatic recognition of China by the United States for another three decades.
 - B. In addition to Mao’s victory, other events, such as the detonation of the first Soviet atomic device and the savage attack of the Republican Party on the Truman administration’s policies, continued to shake Americans in late 1949 and early 1950.
- II. Simultaneously, the Truman administration was itself shifting its Cold War policies dramatically.
 - A. The Soviet detonation of an atomic bomb negated previous U.S. defense policies in Europe and necessitated a major reassessment.
 - B. This reassessment was outlined in a National Security Council Paper (NSC-68), which rejected the practice of Europe-centered and largely economic-based containment against the Soviet Union. Instead, it called for a major military buildup and a global military containment policy against Communism per se.
 1. This new containment policy would include the buildup of allied and conventional military forces and nuclear weapons.
 2. It would also now include the rebuilding of Japan as America’s major ally in Asia and support for the French in their war against Communist/Nationalist guerrillas under Ho Chi Minh in Indochina.
 3. In effect, containment was to be applied against Communist China, as well as the Soviet Union, as specified in Secretary of State Dean Acheson’s “Defense Perimeter” speech.
- III. Although the “Defense Perimeter” speech had omitted both Korea and Taiwan, the United States decided to intervene militarily when, in late June 1950, North Korean forces invaded South Korea.
 - A. Part of the prewar Japanese Empire, Korea had been promised independence in 1943 and had been occupied by U.S. and Russian troops when Japan surrendered after World War II. As the Cold War developed, each superpower created a Korean government in its image, but neither North nor South Korea would accept permanent division, and both threatened unification by force of arms.

- B. Washington interpreted the North Korean attack on June 25, 1950, as a Soviet move requiring a strong American response, albeit a response through the U.N. Security Council, which the U.S.S.R. was, at that point, boycotting. What followed was, thus, officially a U.N. “police action.”
- C. Troops under the command of U.S. General MacArthur landed behind the lines at Inchon and routed the North Korean forces, at which point the administration expanded its war aim to military unification of the entire peninsula.
- D. Seeing this advance as a direct threat, Mao intervened with a major counteroffensive that routed MacArthur’s forces.
- E. MacArthur called for an expanded war against Communist China, but the Truman administration decided to limit the conflict to the Korean peninsula. When MacArthur refused to accept such limitations and publicly criticized them, Truman relieved him of his command.
- F. The ensuing Truman-MacArthur controversy constituted a major crisis in U.S. civil-military relations, as well as the Cold War.

IV. The decision to intervene in Korea had significant consequences for the United States.

- A. The Cold War became a hot war in Korea and cost the lives of 54,000 Americans, hundreds of thousands of Korean and Chinese soldiers, and millions of Korean civilians.
- B. NSC-68 became a reality as U.S. defense expenditures soared and containment was both globalized and militarized.
- C. The United States would now sign a host of military agreements that would commit the nation to the defense of Japan, the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand, Chiang on Taiwan, and the French in Indochina. These commitments would lead to major war scares with Communist China, no recognition of that nation for more than two decades, and eventually, the Vietnam War.
- D. The Korean War and NSC-68 dangerously fused and confused containment of the Soviet Union with containment of Communism and containment of Communism with containment of third-world nationalism.
- E. Although Truman eventually triumphed in his controversy with MacArthur, the entire episode, as well as the Korean War in general, tremendously increased the anti-communist hysteria sweeping the country.

Suggested Readings:

Borg and Heinrichs, eds., *Uncertain Years*.

Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, chs. 1–4.

Haliday and Cumings, *Korea*.

Spanier, *The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War*.

Stueck, *The Korean War*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why did the Cold War spread to Asia and become a hot war in Korea?
2. How and why did the Truman administration decide to fight the Cold War in Asia, as well as in Europe, and with what consequences?

Lecture Nineteen

Eisenhower and the Global Cold War

Scope: In the 1952 presidential campaign, Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890–1969)—the World War II hero running as the Republican presidential candidate—won an overwhelming victory, but his administration has been the subject of much controversy. To his numerous detractors, Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles (1888–1959) pursued a series of shortsighted, illogical, and highly dangerous foreign and military policies in the continuing Cold War that almost led to a nuclear holocaust and planted the seeds for future tragedies. Over the last three decades, however, numerous scholars have defended Eisenhower against his critics, noting the thoughtful and successful behavior that often lay hidden as a result of his indirect and misunderstood style of leadership. This lecture explores the two sides in this debate and attempts to come to a balanced assessment of Eisenhower’s presidency in the realm of foreign affairs.

Outline

- I. Eisenhower’s foreign policies remain today the subject of intense historical debate.
 - A. Both during and after his eight years in office, Eisenhower was subject to sharp criticism concerning his highly aggressive, dangerous, and sometimes unsuccessful foreign policies and his over-reliance on John Foster Dulles, a moralistic and ideologically driven man who saw all issues in black-and-white terms and appeared incapable of rhetorical restraint.
 - B. In the 1980s, however, scholars began to take another look at Eisenhower and to defend him against such charges, noting his numerous successes and explaining his indirect style of leadership, which earlier critics had neither appreciated nor understood.
- II. Analysis of Eisenhower’s overall foreign and defense policies provides us with a classic example of this scholarly disagreement.
 - A. In the 1952 campaign, Republicans had promised a more aggressive foreign policy to “liberate” areas under Soviet domination, instead of practicing mere containment.
 - B. But they had also promised major cuts in defense spending in order to balance the budget. Achieving these goals would require a “New Look” in defense policy—a rejection of NSC-68 and a reliance on relatively inexpensive nuclear weapons over expensive conventional forces.
 - C. That combination would translate into numerous Soviet-American crises that would take the two nations to the brink of nuclear war; thus, the policy soon became known as “brinksmanship.”
 - D. Taken literally, this defense strategy was an insane recipe for a nuclear World War III. The reality, however, was much more complex.
 1. In NSC-162/2, the administration concluded that excessive defense spending could destroy the economy and, therefore, that reliance had to be placed on nuclear weapons. For this reason, the United States would have to continue the policy of containment rather than liberation—at least in the military sphere. Rhetorically, however, the United States would preach liberation to keep hope alive in the Soviet Empire and, of course, to mollify domestic critics on the right.
 2. Dulles would be the public voice of that aggressive liberation policy, while Eisenhower would be the voice of peace—a “good cop/bad cop” strategy that would keep the Soviets off balance.
 3. They would also be kept off balance by the ambiguity of the administration concerning not *how* it would respond in any major crisis but *whether* it would respond.
 - E. Nuclear weapons were far from the only inexpensive tools available to Eisenhower. His administration also relied heavily on an expanded and global alliance system.
 1. This system included NATO, which was expanded to incorporate West Germany, Italy, and Turkey, and numerous bilateral defense pacts, including one with Taiwan.
 2. In addition, it included new multilateral alliances in Southeast Asia (SEATO) and the Middle East (Baghdad Pact and CENTO).
 - F. Eisenhower relied on two additional inexpensive tools: increased foreign aid and the use of the CIA to subvert “undesirable” governments, most notably, in Iran and Guatemala.
- III. This complex policy led to numerous successes and numerous failures and problems.
 - A. Even critics today admit that Eisenhower controlled his administration, that he pursued many astute policies in a highly competent manner, and that the result was eight years of unprecedented peace and prosperity in the midst of the Cold War.

- B. But those critics also maintain that he dangerously and needlessly extended the Cold War into the third world, that his administration consistently confused emerging third-world nationalism with Communism in a dangerous manner, and that he would thereby bequeath to his successors a number of serious problems.
 - C. In this regard, the Cold War was not the only major international issue after World War II. Equally important was the demise of the European colonial empires that began immediately after World War II and accelerated during the 1950s.
 - 1. The United States supported decolonization rhetorically but feared that communist subversion could take over nationalist movements, as well as the new and weak nations that emerged.
 - 2. At the same time, the colonial empires belonged to major European allies, thereby placing the United States in a quandary.
 - 3. As the world's most powerful nation, the United States had a vested interest in stability, which put it at odds with the revolutionary movements sweeping the world.
 - D. Whether out of real interest or blindness, the Eisenhower administration often labeled nationalist movements as communist and tried to overthrow them.
 - E. In Guatemala, the CIA orchestrated the overthrow of democratically elected Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán for his land expropriations, thereby dooming that country to decades of bloodshed and convincing Latin American reformers that the United States was their enemy. The results would include the souring of U.S.-Latin American relations and the Castro revolution in Cuba and alliance with the Soviet Union.
 - F. In the Middle East, the CIA-supported overthrow of Nationalist Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh in Iran and the subsequent rise to power of the shah created a strong American ally in the oil-rich Middle East but eventually led to the anti-American Islamic Revolution of 1979.
 - G. U.S. actions also alienated other nationalist leaders in the Middle East, most notably, Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt, who preached a neutrality in the Cold War that Dulles labeled immoral and unacceptable.
 - H. In Southeast Asia, the United States responded to French military defeat and withdrawal at the hands of the Nationalist and Communist Ho Chi Minh by refusing to sign the Geneva Conference Accords. Instead, the Eisenhower administration chose to use the two-year “breathing space” in the southern half of Vietnam to create an anti-Communist alternative government headed by Ngo Dinh Diem.
 - I. By that time, a promising “thaw” with the Soviets had also ended as a result of the U-2 Affair.
- IV. Eisenhower thus left office with a mixed record, one that leaves scholars in continued disagreement.
- A. On the one hand, he ended hostilities in Korea and ensured eight years of peace and prosperity in the nation, instituted sharp limitations on defense spending, practiced continued containment of the Soviet Union without the previous costs in blood and money, and showed overall astuteness and restraint in the exercise of American power.
 - B. On the other hand, he extended the Cold War into the third world and failed to distinguish between nationalism and Communism, with disastrous future consequences.
 - C. He also failed in his effort to halt the militarization of U.S. foreign policy and American life and the rise of what he labeled the “Military-Industrial Complex.”
 - D. To his credit, he openly admitted that failure in his farewell speech and warned his fellow citizens of what might follow.

Suggested Readings:

Divine, *Eisenhower and the Cold War*.

Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, chs. 5–6.

Greenstein, *The Hidden-Hand Presidency*.

Melanson and Mayers, eds., *Reevaluating Eisenhower*.

Questions to Consider:

1. In what ways did Eisenhower alter and in what ways did he maintain the previous Truman administration policy of containment in the Cold War?
2. How convincing do you find the revisionist praise of the Eisenhower presidency? Why?

Lecture Twenty

Kennedy and the Ultimate Cold War Crisis

Scope: Although Eisenhower and Dulles supposedly practiced “brinksmanship,” it was under John F. Kennedy (1917–1963) that the United States and the Soviet Union went to the brink of nuclear war during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. This lecture examines the origins of the crisis in the rise of Fidel Castro and the disastrous 1961 Bay of Pigs affair, the response of both Castro and Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, the unfolding of the crisis and its peaceful resolution, and finally, its numerous consequences. We will also look at some of Kennedy’s other foreign and defense policies and, in the process, attempt to assess his overall legacy.

Outline

- I. Kennedy narrowly won the 1960 presidential race by promising bold and vigorous policies in the Cold War.
 - A. Kennedy sought to address the “missile gap” that had supposedly developed with the successful Soviet launching of an intercontinental ballistic missile and the space satellite Sputnik in 1957 and rejected Eisenhower’s reliance in defense strategy on nuclear weapons. Instead, Kennedy called for a defense policy known as “flexible response,” which involved a major increase in all types of military forces and expenditures to provide the president with a host of options at all levels.
 - B. In foreign affairs, Kennedy similarly promised an aggressive anti-communist policy. In the 1960 presidential debates against his Republican opponent Richard Nixon, Kennedy was the hawk who attacked Eisenhower’s failures in preventing the spread of Communism.
 - C. Nowhere was this attack more politically effective than in regard to Fidel Castro, who had overthrown the Cuban dictator Batista in early 1959. Since that time, he had engaged in a series of confrontations with Washington and gradually moved Cuba into the Soviet orbit.
 - D. By the time Kennedy was inaugurated, the United States had broken diplomatic relations with Castro, and the CIA had begun to plan his overthrow.
- II. One of Kennedy’s first major actions as president would be the failed implementation of this plan to overthrow Castro—the Bay of Pigs invasion.
 - A. The CIA had trained a group of Cuban exiles to invade Cuba and overthrow Castro with U.S. assistance, and it now sought and obtained Kennedy’s approval to proceed.
 - B. Kennedy inherited this plan from the preceding administration, though he now faced what was known as the “disposal problem”—that is, what to do with the Cuban exiles who had been trained if he refused to launch the operation.
 - C. But Kennedy clearly wanted to launch the operation. He and his advisers were obsessed with overthrowing Castro for a host of reasons that included but went beyond the Cold War mentality of the era.
 1. Domestically, Kennedy found it impossible to retreat from his aggressive rhetoric during the presidential campaign.
 2. He may have felt personally betrayed by Castro’s turn to the Soviet Union because he had previously supported Castro during the 1950s in his struggle against Batista.
 3. Castro was also an example of the erosion of imperial authority in the 20th century and a challenge to continued U.S. hegemony in Latin America. If not overthrown, his rebellion against U.S. hegemony might spread throughout the hemisphere.
 - D. The result of the Bay of Pigs invasion was, in the words of one analyst, “the perfect failure”; Castro’s forces routed and captured the invading force.
 1. Kennedy’s efforts to hide U.S. involvement led to cancellation of a second air strike against Castro’s air force.
 2. Even with that air strike, however, the invasion probably would have failed. Castro expected another air strike, realizing that the CIA would attempt a duplication of its successful 1954 coup against Arbenz in Guatemala.
 - E. Kennedy now came under withering assault both internally and internationally, with domestic opponents accusing him of incompetence and international critics attacking him as an imperialist.
 - F. The Bay of Pigs was but one of a series of foreign policy disasters for Kennedy in 1961.
 1. At the Vienna summit conference in June, Khrushchev bullied and threatened Kennedy regarding the issue of access to Berlin. Two months later, he erected the Berlin Wall to stop the exodus from East Germany—a move Kennedy appeared helpless to halt.

2. Simultaneously, Charles de Gaulle initiated his independent policy that would lead to French withdrawal from the NATO unified military command and the American orbit.
3. In Geneva, Kennedy would be forced to accept a humiliating settlement that reneutralized Laos under a coalition government.

G. Despite the Bay of Pigs failure, the administration continued, and even increased, its efforts to overthrow Castro.

III. The result would be the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962—the ultimate nuclear crisis of the Cold War.

- A. Convinced he would soon face another U.S.-supported invasion, Castro appealed to Khrushchev for military aid and a public alliance. The Soviet leader responded by sending medium- and intermediate-range nuclear ballistic missiles, as well as theater nuclear missiles and more than 40,000 combat troops.
- B. Khrushchev's motives included not only protection of Cuba from another invasion but also a desire to force a settlement of the Berlin issue and to counter his numerous critics in the communist camp and the Politburo.
- C. A CIA U-2 flight in mid-October discovered missile sites under construction in Cuba and led Kennedy to establish a special executive committee to advise him on his available options.
 1. That committee quickly rejected diplomatic responses and narrowed the options to two military ones: an immediate air strike against the missile sites or a declaration of open surveillance and blockade.
 2. The members of the committee split on which option to recommend. Led by the president's brother Robert, they eventually recommended and the president agreed to begin with the second option, then, if necessary, to proceed with an air strike and invasion.
- D. On October 22, 1962, Kennedy publicly announced a "quarantine" of Cuba to be enforced by the U.S. Navy and warned that any missile attack launched from Cuba would be considered an attack launched by the Soviet Union, requiring a similar U.S. response.
- E. In this ultimate nuclear crisis, Kennedy exhibited great flexibility in both his selective use of the blockade and his selective responses to Khrushchev's messages.
- F. Moscow agreed to remove the missiles on October 28, thereby ending the worst crisis of the Cold War.

IV. The Cuban Missile Crisis had both positive and negative consequences.

- A. On the positive side, it was a sobering experience for both sides that led to a definite thaw in Soviet-American relations and calls for new approaches to international crises.
 1. In his famous American University speech in 1963, Kennedy called for arms control agreements and new approaches to world affairs.
 2. A "hot line" teletype link was soon instituted to connect U.S. and Soviet leaders directly.
 3. In 1963, a limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was signed.
- B. But the missile crisis also led to attacks on Khrushchev for recklessness and cowardice, his replacement in 1964 by Leonid Brezhnev and Alexei Kosygin, and a "never again" attitude in Moscow that reinforced the Soviet military buildup.
- C. In the West, it escalated the growing crisis with de Gaulle.
- D. Perhaps most seriously, the missile crisis created a belief that flexible response, combined with prudent diplomacy, had worked, controlled the situation, and resulted in a successful outcome.
 1. Critics argue that none of this was true and that there was only an illusion of control.
 2. Recent revelations make clear that the United States seriously underestimated the number of Soviet forces in Cuba and their power to react independently and with nuclear force.
 3. Those revelations also make clear that the possibility of accidental escalation was far greater than originally thought.
- E. Whether it was true or false in regard to the Cuban Missile Crisis, the belief in the rational and successful use of calibrated military response would play a major role in the Vietnam tragedy about to unfold.

Suggested Readings:

Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*.

Beschloss, *The Crisis Years*.

Higgins, *The Perfect Failure*.

Paterson, *Kennedy's Quest for Victory*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What strengths and weaknesses did John F. Kennedy exhibit in his conduct of Soviet-American relations in general and in regard to Cuba in particular?
2. What were the consequences of the Cuban Missile Crisis? On balance, were these consequences mostly positive or negative?

Lecture Twenty-One

Vietnam and the War at Home

Scope: Contrary to popular belief, the Vietnam War neither began nor ended during the presidency of Lyndon Johnson. As explained in previous lectures, it began under President Truman as part of his global containment policy in the Cold War and was then transformed and expanded—first, under Eisenhower, then under Kennedy. The failure of their efforts by 1964 led Johnson to the massive expansion for which he is famous. This lecture examines that expansion and the reasons for its failure. It also examines the growing antiwar sentiment at home during the years 1964–1968 and the ensuing breakdown of the bipartisan consensus that had dominated U.S. foreign policy since World War II. The lecture concludes with the Tet Offensive of 1968 and Johnson’s consequent decision to de-escalate and not seek reelection, followed by an assessment of the meaning and impact of this tragic chapter in American history.

Outline

- I. When Lyndon Johnson became president in November of 1963, he inherited a major commitment in Southeast Asia that had begun under President Truman and expanded substantially under Eisenhower and Kennedy.
 - A. Franklin Roosevelt had asserted on numerous occasions that Indochina was to become independent rather than be returned to France, but Truman gradually reversed this policy, and by the early 1950s, the United States was paying for 70 percent of the French war effort in Indochina.
 - B. That effort failed, however, and in 1954, the Geneva Conference established the independent states of Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, with the latter temporarily divided for a two-year period at the 17th parallel.
 - C. The Eisenhower administration decided to use the two-year respite in the southern part of Vietnam to create a Nationalist but anti-Communist alternative to Ho Chi Minh’s government in the North.
 - D. Nationalist leader Ngo Dinh Diem received massive U.S. aid but refused to hold unification elections in 1956; nonetheless, he became one of the great “success” stories of U.S. foreign policy during the late 1950s. In reality, however, his authoritarianism and Catholicism alienated many in this decentralized and Buddhist region. By the time Eisenhower left office, a full-scale insurgency supported by Hanoi had erupted and Diem was in serious trouble.
 - E. Kennedy and his advisers believed that they had to prevent a Communist guerrilla victory in South Vietnam and that they could do so through combined political and military initiatives designed to win “hearts and minds.”
 - F. In the summer of 1963, Buddhist monks joined the anti-Diem forces with public immolations that convinced the administration that Diem had actually become a hindrance to the war effort. Consequently, the green light was given to a military coup that overthrew and murdered Diem and his brother in October 1963.
 - G. Kennedy was assassinated a month later. What he would have done had he lived remains a matter of historical dispute and conjecture.
- II. Lyndon Johnson (1908–1973) faced a major crisis in South Vietnam and decided to expand massively the U.S. military commitment to avoid what was perceived as a catastrophic defeat.
 - A. By the time Johnson became president, the Strategic Hamlet Program and ARVN offensive were both clear and total failures. Furthermore, Diem’s assassination ushered in a period of extraordinary political instability in South Vietnam.
 - B. In this situation, the Communists launched a major offensive, which included regular units from the North and guerrillas in the South, designed to further political disintegration and, thereby, push U.S. forces out.
 - C. But the Communist offensive had the opposite effect. Johnson and his advisers decided that defeat was intolerable and could be avoided by a major U.S. commitment.
 - D. The ensuing decision to intervene in strength was actually a series of decisions in 1964 and early 1965.
 1. The first decision in the spring of 1964 was to expand the U.S. military presence to stop the deterioration of the South and illustrate U.S. seriousness to Hanoi.
 2. The second decision, made at the same time but implemented in August, was to obtain a congressional resolution of support—again, to illustrate seriousness to Hanoi and to neutralize the war as an issue in the 1964 presidential campaign.
 3. Both these initiatives failed to deter Hanoi, leading, instead, to an expansion of North Vietnamese military efforts in the South. In late 1964, the administration decided to initiate a sustained bombing campaign against the North that would take place in February and March of 1965.

4. To halt the Communist ground offensive and protect U.S. air bases, Johnson also agreed to General William Westmoreland's request for combat forces—at first, only a few divisions but increasing to 200,000 by mid-1965. That number would more than double by late 1967.
- E. This enormous military escalation would fail for numerous reasons.
 1. Critics on the right argue that the failure resulted from Johnson's veto of requests by the Joint Chiefs of Staff that the reserves be called up and the nation informed that it was involved in a full-scale war.
 2. On a broader level, however, the administration had no clear-cut strategy and no clear-cut political goals beyond making Hanoi amenable to a negotiated settlement on U.S. terms that Hanoi adamantly refused to accept.
 3. Furthermore, the bombing campaign in the North was based on a questionable doctrine regarding the ability of air power to weaken an opponent's will. It was also undertaken against a nation with few good targets, faced large-scale Soviet missile defense systems, and was implemented in a counterproductive, gradualist fashion.
 4. U.S. ground forces did prevent certain defeat in 1965, but true victory would have required millions of men to counter Hanoi's response of full mobilization and close-in fighting designed to maximize U.S. casualties.
 5. The ensuing stalemate suited the North. It also destroyed the social fabric of the South—the very society that the United States was attempting to create and defend.
 6. Equally important, Vietnam was never a priority—for Johnson, his predecessors, or his successors. Each simply tried to prevent a defeat under his watch. But whether a greater effort could have succeeded is doubtful.
- III. The war in Vietnam would have significant negative consequences for the United States.
 - A. Johnson's decision to fight the war without any tax increase or decrease in his Great Society programs led to inflation, economic decline, and financial crisis by early 1968.
 - B. The war also resulted in a militarization of U.S. foreign policy elsewhere, most notably, in the Dominican Republic.
 - C. Third-world nations began to vote against the United States in the U.N. General Assembly, while allies, such as de Gaulle in France, questioned the wisdom of American leaders.
 - D. Most importantly, and ironically, the war designed to preserve Johnson's credibility and the great liberal consensus wound up destroying both.
 - E. But the administration correctly noted that it had not begun the war; the conflict had been escalated by three former presidents from both political parties and flowed logically from America's global Cold War policies.
 - F. The final blow for Johnson was the Communist Tet Offensive of early 1968. Despite the eventual defeat of this offensive by U.S. and ARVN forces, Tet shattered any remaining public faith in administration policies by showing Communist power and the lack of any previously promised "light at the end of the tunnel."
 - G. It also shattered Johnson's faith. Now facing strong antiwar opposition within his own party, as well as military requests for even more troops, he recalled a group of senior advisers known as the "Wise Men," many former Cold Warriors, who advised rejection of further escalation and told him that he was in a no-win situation. Johnson called for peace talks and announced his decision not to run for reelection.
- IV. Although the war would continue for another seven years, the years 1965–1968 marked the high tide of the American commitment, a commitment that had failed by 1968.
 - A. That failure made clear for the first time the limits of post–World War II American power.
 - B. Defeat in Vietnam also revealed that global military containment as practiced was unworkable, but the defeat itself had little direct impact on the Cold War balance of power.
 - C. The failure in Vietnam would have an enormous and ongoing impact, however, on the American people and future American foreign policy.
 1. It would destroy both the liberal domestic consensus of the 1960s and the bipartisan foreign policy consensus of the previous 30 years.
 2. It would split the Democratic Party and lead to Republican victory in the 1968 elections and a dramatic reorientation of American foreign policy.
 3. The failure in Vietnam led numerous Americans to question for the first time their fundamental beliefs, not only regarding the Cold War but also their historic views of themselves and their proper place in the world.
 4. The true meaning of the failure in Vietnam and whether that failure could have been avoided have been the subjects of furious and ongoing debate that continues to affect American foreign policy even today.

Suggested Readings:

Herring, *America's Longest War*.

Hunt, *Lyndon Johnson's War*.

Karnow, *Vietnam*.

Schulzinger, *A Time for War*.

Sheehan, *A Bright Shining Lie*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why did the United States fail to achieve its goals in South Vietnam, and what did that failure reveal regarding the limits of American power?
2. What were the consequences of the American failure in Vietnam, and how do they affect U.S. foreign policies and domestic politics today?

Lecture Twenty-Two

The Nixon-Kissinger “Grand Design”

Scope: The American failure in Vietnam played a major role in Richard Nixon’s 1968 electoral victory. It also forced Nixon and his advisers, particularly Henry Kissinger, Nixon’s first national security adviser and, later, his secretary of state, to recognize the limits of American power in the world and try to create an appropriate balance between desired ends and available means. The result would be the most fundamental reorientation of American foreign policy since World War II and the early years of the Cold War. In general terms, a balance-of-power approach to international relations replaced the rigidly anti-communist ideological approach that had come to dominate U.S. foreign policy in the Cold War. Specific policies embodied in this shift would include not only withdrawal from Vietnam but also détente with the Soviet Union and the stunning reopening of relations with Communist China after more than 20 years of nonrecognition. But the shift was only partially successful. The Nixon-Kissinger policies also resulted in temporary escalation of the violence in Vietnam, the subversion of a democratically elected leftist government in Chile, the first oil crisis and a major Soviet-American confrontation in the Middle East, and continued American economic decline. It also led to massive usurpation and abuses of executive power that would culminate in the Watergate crisis and Nixon’s forced resignation.

Outline

- I. Although he had risen to political power as an ardent anti-communist, Richard Nixon (1913–1994) clearly realized by 1969 that dramatic changes and limits were necessary in U.S. foreign policy.
 - A. Major problems included not only Vietnam but also serious economic decline, allied dissent, and domestic dissent and upheaval that were ripping the country apart. The United States desperately needed to create an appropriate balance of ends with available means.
 - B. Simultaneously, however, the nation faced a Soviet Union that had achieved nuclear parity by 1969 and could claim global superpower status. At the same time, the Soviets had their own serious economic and political problems.
 - C. The unique period of bipolarity following World War II was coming to an end as other nations completed their recovery from the war and reasserted their independence.
 - D. To reorient U.S. foreign policy in this changed environment, Nixon relied on Henry Kissinger (b. 1923), a foreign policy scholar with a European balance-of-power approach to the world. The two would construct a new U.S. foreign policy based far less on ideology than the policies of their predecessors and far more on realpolitik and a recognition of limits.
 - E. A key component of the Nixon-Kissinger “grand design” was a willingness to deal with Communist China, as well as the Soviet Union, to create a new triangular relationship and balance of power.
- II. In general terms, the grand design was successful.
 - A. By 1971–1972, the combination of Sino-Soviet border clashes and threats of nuclear war had led Beijing to respond positively to U.S. diplomatic probes and to invite, first, Kissinger to visit secretly, then, Nixon to pay a public visit.
 - B. Simultaneously, the Soviet-American détente that had begun in 1966–1967 but had been wrecked in 1968 by the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and the aftermath of the Tet Offensive revived and blossomed.
 - 1. Key factors for the Soviets were not only the U.S.-China rapprochement but also the desire for U.S. trade and final settlement of the German issue from World War II.
 - 2. German Chancellor Willy Brandt played a critical role with his acceptance of the continued existence of two German nations and the new postwar boundaries with Poland in 1970. Consequently, in 1972, the four occupying powers reached accord on Berlin and the two Germanys recognized each other.
 - 3. The 1972 Moscow summit conference resulted in a series of major Soviet-American accords covering trade, joint space exploration, and SALT I—the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty that seriously limited anti-ballistic missile defense systems and temporarily froze production of ballistic missiles pending a permanent agreement within five years.
 - 4. More successes would follow in 1974–1975 under Nixon’s successor, Gerald Ford (1913–2006), including the Vladivostok summit and principles to guide the SALT II talks, along with the 1975 Helsinki Accords. In Helsinki, both powers and numerous other nations accepted the European boundaries of 1945, in effect belatedly ending World War II. They also agreed to the principles of détente and respect for human rights.
 - C. Nixon gradually withdrew U.S. combat forces from Vietnam and had Kissinger conduct secret peace talks with North Vietnamese envoy Le Duc Tho in Paris. These talks culminated in the 1973 Paris Peace Accords, which ended U.S. combat involvement in the war and earned the two negotiators the Nobel Peace Prize.

- D. Nixon also ended the draft, cut army strength by nearly one-third, and announced the Nixon Doctrine, in which he made clear that the United States would no longer send its own troops to any nation or area threatened by Communism.

III. But the Nixon-Kissinger foreign policies also resulted in numerous failures and problems.

- A. Despite Nixon's efforts to the contrary, the Vietnam War ended in a humiliating defeat by 1975.
- B. In South America, the administration responded to the democratic election of Marxist Salvador Allende in Chile with a series of direct and indirect covert operations that at first failed but, by 1973, had resulted in Allende's murder and the establishment of a brutal military dictatorship.
- C. In the former Portuguese colony of Angola, forces supported by Russia and Cuba triumphed in a civil war over those supported by the United States and South Africa.
- D. Domestic and global economies saw major problems and disturbances, with the United States suffering serious inflation and its first trade deficits since the 1930s.
 - 1. In response and in line with the Nixon Doctrine, the administration dramatically increased arms sales abroad to counter the trade deficit and build up regional allies, most notably, Iran.
 - 2. To pay for those arms, Iran, in turn, supported major price increases by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1971, leading Nixon to devalue the dollar and OPEC to respond with another round of price increases and insistence on the right to buy out foreign oil companies.
- E. In 1973, Egypt and Syria attacked Israel in an effort to regain territories they had lost in the Six-Day War of 1967.
 - 1. With the United States backing Israel and the U.S.S.R. backing Egypt and Syria, the war threatened to expand into a great-power conflict.
 - 2. Kissinger was able to arrange a cease-fire, but the Arab states responded to U.S. support for Israel with an oil boycott, and their OPEC allies used this as an excuse for additional and major price increases.
- F. Détente began to collapse as the United States accused the Soviets of breaking the accords in the Middle East and Africa, while the Soviets rejected the U.S. Congress's linkage of increased trade to a relaxation of their suppression of internal dissent and Jewish immigration.
- G. The Nixon-Kissinger foreign policies also led to the Watergate scandal that forced the president's resignation under threat of impeachment.
 - 1. Nixon's and Kissinger's major reorientation of U.S. foreign policy, combined with their passion for order and control, led them to conduct a secretive foreign policy, to massively expand executive powers, and to treat any dissent as a threat to U.S. security, requiring drastic action.
 - 2. Consequently, the White House planned and sought to cover up a series of illegal activities, most notably (but far from exclusively), the break-in at Democratic headquarters in the Watergate building that led to revelations of other illegal activities.
 - 3. The White House argued that, in the interests of national security, the president stood above the law. Congress refused to agree and, in one of the most serious crises in American political history, forced Nixon's resignation.

IV. Historians continue to debate the wisdom of the Nixon-Kissinger grand design and its legacy.

- A. Many emphasize the successes, most notably, the establishment of relations with China, and view Nixon and Kissinger as the most innovative and realistic U.S. policymakers since the early days of the Cold War.
- B. Others point to the numerous failures and the fact that this "realism without morality" led to Watergate and one of the worst constitutional crises in U.S. history.
- C. The grand design was also out of step with American values and led to a moralistic backlash in both political parties, albeit from opposite ends of the political spectrum and with very different proposed alternatives: by Jimmy Carter for the Democrats and Ronald Reagan for the Republicans.

Suggested Readings:

Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, chs. 7–10.

Isaacson, *Kissinger*.

Suri, *Power and Protest*.

Questions to Consider:

- 1. How do you account for Nixon's dramatic reorientation of U.S. foreign policy given his history as a staunch anti-communist?
- 2. Considering the record of the Nixon-Kissinger years, can a democratic society, such as the United States, conduct a foreign policy based on principles of European power politics and remain a democracy? Why or why not?

Lecture Twenty-Three

Ideology Anew and the End of the Cold War

Scope: The years 1976–1988 witnessed what appeared to be two diametrically opposed U.S. foreign policies, the first under the Democrat Jimmy Carter (b. 1924) and the second under the Republican Ronald Reagan (1911–2004). Actually, the two had much in common. Both opposed what they perceived to be the amorality of the Nixon-Kissinger balance-of-power approach to international affairs. Carter charged that this approach had led the United States to lose its internal moral compass and standing in the world and that the nation needed to return to a foreign policy based on idealism and a unique American mission. Reagan agreed but pressed for different strategies. Carter and his supporters wanted less emphasis on Soviet-American relations and a greater emphasis on third-world and transnational issues, as well as an end to support for right-wing dictatorships. Reagan supported those dictatorships as preferable to left-wing ones. He also opposed détente with the Soviets as a “one-way street” that had enabled the Soviets to achieve unacceptable military superiority over the United States.

The perceived failure of Carter’s policies from 1977–1980 enabled Reagan to defeat him in the presidential election of 1980. At first, Reagan’s policies resulted in increased Soviet-American tensions and a return to the war scares of the early Cold War years. But a major shift in Soviet leadership occurred with the advent of Mikhail Gorbachev (b. 1931) and his new policies of Glasnost and Perestroika. Whether that shift occurred because of or despite Reagan’s early policies remains a matter of historical dispute. Whatever the reasons, the result would be a quick, dramatic, and peaceful end to the Cold War, the Soviet Empire in Eastern Europe, and by 1991, the Soviet Union itself under Reagan’s successor, George Bush.

Outline

- I. In the aftermath of Watergate, many Americans raised once again the fundamental question of whether a realist balance-of-power approach to foreign affairs was incompatible with American democratic values. Carter made this a central theme of his successful 1976 presidential campaign.
 - A. Carter’s policies seemed schizophrenic, however, perhaps because of his lack of experience in foreign affairs and his reliance on warring advisers.
 1. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance emphasized détente, relations with the third world, and world “leadership without hegemony.”
 2. National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, in contrast, was an unreconstructed Cold Warrior who insisted that the Soviet Union remained the key threat to the United States.
 - B. Carter would waffle between the two approaches until his last year in office and would appear to leave a record of failure.
- II. Contrary to campaign rhetoric and popular mythology, however, Carter could boast numerous foreign policy successes during his one term in office.
 - A. In Latin America, his emphasis on human rights and concessions to nationalism resulted in a dramatic improvement in relations and numerous agreements.
 - B. In Africa, the focus on human rights and a North-South dialogue led to a major shift in U.S. policy in the region that reaped significant dividends.
 - C. In the Middle East, Carter succeeded in mediating the Camp David Accords and the ensuing path-breaking peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.
- III. Nevertheless, Carter’s foreign policy failures outweighed his successes and dominated the headlines.
 - A. Détente collapsed as the Soviets angrily rejected the Jackson-Vanik linkage of trade to greater human rights in the U.S.S.R. A treaty was completed in 1979, but the Senate appeared unlikely to ratify it.
 - B. While the Senate debated, Iran exploded; the shah was overthrown, and the Iranian oil industry virtually collapsed. Islamic fundamentalists took over the Iranian government, seized the U.S. embassy, and took hostages in late 1979.
 - C. A month later, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to prevent a client government from falling to Islamic fundamentalists.
 - D. Carter’s strong response to the Soviet invasion included withdrawing SALT II from Senate consideration and announcing a major U.S. military buildup. He also instituted the Carter Doctrine, which warned that any attempt to gain control of the Persian Gulf region would be considered an assault on vital U.S. interests and would justify a military response.

- E. But Carter appeared helpless and unable to stop the Soviets or the Islamic fundamentalists in Iran. When economic and diplomatic pressure failed to release the hostages, he ordered a military rescue mission that failed miserably and led to the resignation of Secretary of State Vance.
 - F. Seeing these failures and serious economic problems as the result of incompetence, Americans voted Carter out of office during the 1980 presidential campaign in favor of Ronald Reagan.
- IV. Reagan's election ushered in a 12-year period of conservative Republican rule that culminated in the extraordinary and unexpected end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union.
- A. Reagan shared with Carter a dislike of the Nixon-Kissinger balance-of-power approach to international affairs. Unlike Carter, however, Reagan called for an emphasis on the Soviet-American conflict, an end to détente as contrary to American interests, and a return to the moralistic view of the Cold War.
 - B. He also called for an expansion of the Carter military buildup and a shift away from the Nixon-Ford-Carter policy of seeking military parity with the Soviets, favoring superiority instead.
 - C. Critics argued that this approach was based on a dated and incorrect view of the world, coupled with exceptional presidential ignorance about world issues, history, and geography. The American public loved it, but its impact on the Soviets remains unclear.
 - D. The most dramatic and ideologically driven shift from his predecessor occurred in Latin America, where Reagan instituted major initiatives against the left in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Grenada.
 - E. More mixed and confusing was Reagan's record in the Middle East, where he presided over a failed military intervention in Lebanon and domestic controversy in the Iran-Contra Affair.
- V. But the focal point of Reagan's foreign policies was the Soviet Union, and here, the results were clear, dramatic, and startling.
- A. During Reagan's first term, Soviet-American relations reached what many consider an all-time low, with a massive nuclear buildup on both sides, constant conflicts, and talk of World War III.
 - B. A major shift began in 1985, however, partially as a result of domestic and allied dissent and partially as a result of changes in the Soviet leadership.
 - C. Overruling some of his hard-line advisers, Reagan responded positively to new Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, meeting with him in Geneva in 1985 and Iceland in 1986.
 - 1. By 1987, the two had agreed in the INF Treaty to the destruction of all intermediate-range missiles in Europe.
 - 2. In 1988, Gorbachev agreed to withdraw Soviet forces from Afghanistan, Reagan visited Moscow, and Gorbachev announced both unilateral cuts in the Red Army and an end to the 1968 Brezhnev Doctrine.
 - D. In 1989, with Reagan's successor, George Bush, in office, the Soviet Empire in Eastern Europe collapsed. By 1991, a major Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) had been signed.
 - E. Within the Soviet Union, economic problems continued and nationalist demands for autonomy gained momentum. An attempted Communist Party coup failed in August of 1991 and led to the breakup of the Soviet Union into a series of individual nation-states. The Cold War had not only ended but had done so peacefully.
- VI. Reagan's role in this dramatic and unexpected end to the Cold War remains unclear.
- A. His supporters claim that the hard-line policies pursued during his first term succeeded in forcing changes in Soviet behavior while restoring American self-confidence. His positive response to those changes during his second term reinforced them and led to the end of the Cold War and the Soviet Union.
 - B. Reagan's critics argue that he had nothing to do with the dramatic changes in Soviet policies, that they had purely internal causes, and that Reagan's early policies actually delayed Soviet reform.
 - C. In between these two schools of thought are those who argue that Reagan's flexibility and positive response to Gorbachev during his second term was the key factor and that credit also belongs to his Cold War predecessors for successfully pursuing containment of the Soviet Union for more than four decades.
 - D. Still others argue that the Cold war ended because both superpowers realized they had declined and could no longer afford the conflict. In this view, there were no winners.
 - E. Whichever approach one favors, one fact is clear: By 1991, the United States was the sole remaining superpower and the most powerful nation the world had ever seen. The limits of that power and how it would be used remained to be seen.

Suggested Readings:

Hogan, ed., *The End of the Cold War*.

LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions*.

Smith, *Morality, Reason, and Power*.

Westad, *The Global Cold War*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why did the Cold War come to an end?
2. Were Ronald Reagan's policies different from those of his Cold War predecessors? If so, in what ways were they different and in what ways were they similar, and what role did they play in ending the conflict?

Lecture Twenty-Four

The United States and the World Since 1991

Scope: Between 1776 and 1991, the United States had transformed itself from one of the weakest countries on the globe to the most powerful nation the world had ever seen. It had succeeded in obtaining its independence, in reforming its government and maintaining that independence in a hostile world, in expanding across an entire continent to become one of the largest countries in the world, and after the Civil War, in expanding overseas to become one of the world's great powers. It then engaged in three global conflicts during the 20th century with its major adversaries—both militarily and ideologically—and vanquished all of them. After briefly summarizing that process, this concluding lecture analyzes both the major reasons for American successes and the major ideas Americans developed during these years about themselves and their place in the world. It also briefly assesses the new challenges the United States has faced and continues to face since the end of the Cold War and the alternative policies for those challenges that have been proposed and attempted.

Outline

- I.** Numerous factors account for the unprecedented rise of the United States to superpower status.
 - A.** During the critical years of the nation's infancy, from 1776 to 1815, it was able to take advantage of European rivalries and a unique geographical position to achieve and maintain its independence and expand in territory.
 - B.** It also developed, during this time, an effective central government with sufficient power to defend itself and promote expansion without destroying liberty.
 - C.** From 1815 to 1848, the nation used these advantages and its growing population and power to expand across the entire continent, thereby becoming the dominant power in North America and commercially across the Pacific Ocean and into Asia.
 - D.** Territorial expansion reignited the issue of slavery expansion, however, leading, first, to expansionist failures during the 1850s, then, to a brutal civil war that almost ended the rise of American power.
 - E.** Union success in the Civil War ended that threat and ushered in a massive Industrial Revolution that would make the United States the world's leading economic power by the 1890s.
 - F.** The United States would then use that economic power to create naval power and, with it, both formal and informal empires.
 - G.** When the country found those empires and its neutral rights threatened by rising German power during World War I, the United States entered that conflict and attempted to remake the entire world in its own economic and ideological image.
 - H.** That effort would fail and lead to a partial withdrawal from world leadership. But when that led to World War II, the United States again entered the conflict and fully mobilized its resources and population for a total global and coalition war.
 - I.** Victory in World War II left the United States in a position of unprecedented global power, both militarily and economically, but also with a new and powerful enemy in the Soviet Union and a resulting Cold War that lasted more than four decades.
 - J.** With victory in the Cold War, the United States was, by 1991, the greatest power the world had ever seen, with no major enemies left.
 - K.** Its capitalist and democratic ideology had also triumphed over all competitors—monarchism, fascism, and Communism—and globalization now promised the further spread of its culture and values, along with its goods and power.
- II.** The end of the Cold War raised the central question, however, of the specific policies the United States would pursue as the sole superpower in the world.
 - A.** Looking to the wave of worldwide liberal reform and the peaceful settlement of seemingly insoluble problems in such areas as South Africa, Central America, and Northern Ireland, many argued that American ideology had triumphed globally and that the only remaining question was exactly how—not whether—the United States would lead the world.
 - B.** Under President George H. W. Bush (b. 1924), the answer appeared to be a strongly interventionist policy similar in many ways to the hemispheric and global policies of Woodrow Wilson.

1. This policy included unilateral military intervention and hegemony in the Western Hemisphere, as shown by the 1989 invasion of Panama and the ensuing arrest, trial, and imprisonment of its president, Manuel Noriega, on drug-trafficking charges.
 2. Elsewhere, U.S. military power would be asserted through a revival of the United Nations for multilateral intervention under U.S. leadership and control.
 3. The 1990–1991 war against Iraq for its invasion of Kuwait stands as the most notable and successful example of this policy.
 4. That success paved the way for a major breakthrough in the Middle East peace process under Bush’s successor, William Clinton (b. 1946), which resulted in both the Israeli-Palestinian agreements of 1993 and the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty of 1994.
- C. Some foreign policy experts disagreed with this interventionist stance and argued for different approaches.
1. Some maintained that American tradition and bitter experiences, such as the Vietnam War, led to the conclusion that the United States should minimize its military interventions.
 2. Others took a middle course of selective intervention, arguing that American resources were limited but that the country’s interests needed to be protected, and in such places as the former Yugoslavia, it could not simply stand by and allow genocide to take place.
 3. Still others called for a new focus on global and nonmilitary issues, such as environmental degradation, global warming, and human rights.
- D. President Clinton combined elements of all these proposed policies, ordering more military interventions than any president since Woodrow Wilson and expanding NATO into Eastern Europe. At the same time, Clinton avoided some interventions for fear of overcommitment and exhibited concern over global warming. Perhaps most notably, he actively pursued global economic growth.
- E. In the 2000 presidential campaign, Democratic candidate Albert Gore (b. 1948) championed a continued combination of these elements with even more emphasis on environmental issues, while his Republican opponent, George W. Bush (b. 1946), called instead for a more limited and unilateral policy.
- III. A few commentators disagreed with all the proposed approaches in the aftermath of the Cold War, arguing that the current situation was both abnormal and ephemeral, that American ideology and power had not fully triumphed, and that a “clash of civilizations” was in the offing. That is, indeed, what seemed to occur in the aftermath of 9/11.
- A. In fighting this new war against Islamic fundamentalism, the Bush administration appeared to break dramatically with both its 2000 campaign statements regarding a realistic and more limited foreign policy and with U.S. history, by announcing a policy of unilateral preemptive war when it felt threatened and by launching such a preemptive war without the support of many of its major allies.
 - B. In reality, however, these strategies reflected numerous themes that had marked previous U.S. foreign policies and the rise to superpower status—most notably, the idealistic appeal to an American mission to bring democracy to the world in the process of fighting a war in defense of specific interests.
 - C. Unilateralism also had a long history in this country, especially during supposedly isolationist times.
 - D. The actual expansion of U.S. power in the process of fighting a supposedly defensive war also had considerable historical precedent.
 - E. The problems the Bush administration has experienced in Iraq illustrate once again the limits of power—even power that appeared as unlimited as that possessed by the United States between 1991 and 2001.

Suggested Readings:

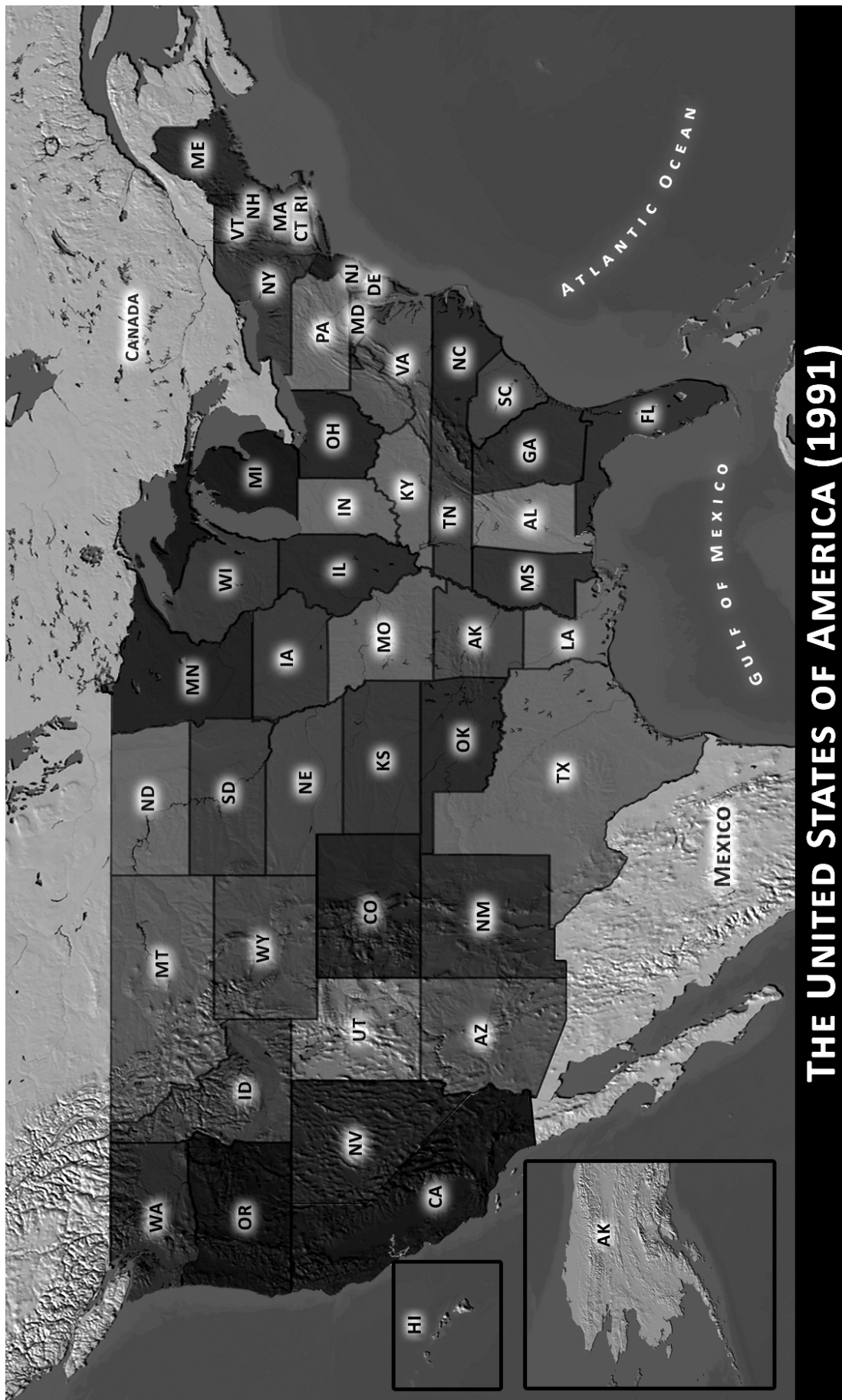
Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*.

Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*.

Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*

Questions to Consider:

1. What were the most important factors in the rise of the United States as the world’s most powerful nation and sole superpower between 1776 and 1991?
2. Which of the proposed policies do you think the United States should have pursued in the decade following the end of the Cold War? Why?
3. What are the continuities and discontinuities between U.S. policies after 9/11 and the policies the United States has historically pursued?



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (1991)

Timeline

1776	Declaration of Independence.
1778	Franco-American Treaties of Alliance and Commerce.
1781	Franco-American victory at Yorktown; Articles of Confederation adopted.
1783	Treaty of Paris ends War for Independence.
1787	Constitutional Convention.
1789	New government under Constitution begins.
1793	Washington's Neutrality Proclamation; Genêt affair.
1794	Jay's Treaty with England.
1795	Pinckney's Treaty with Spain.
1796	Washington's Farewell Address.
1798	XYZ Affair and Quasi War with France.
1800	Convention of Mortefontaine ends Quasi War and French alliance; Treaty of San Ildefonso cedes Louisiana to France; election of Jefferson.
1803	Louisiana Purchase.
1807	<i>Chesapeake</i> affair and embargo.
1812–1815	War of 1812 and Treaty of Ghent.
1817	Rush-Bagot Agreement with Britain.
1818	Boundary Convention with Britain.
1819	Transcontinental Treaty with Spain.
1823	Monroe Doctrine.
1830	Indian Removal Act.
1835–1836	Texan revolution.
1842	Webster-Ashburton Treaty; Tyler Doctrine extends Monroe Doctrine to Hawaii.
1844	Treaty of Wangxia with China.
1845	Annexation of Texas.
1846	War with Mexico begins; Oregon settlement with Britain.
1848	Acquisition of California and New Mexico via the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.
1853–1854	Perry mission and Treaty of Kanagawa with Japan.
1861–1865	American Civil War.
1866	Maximilian affair comes to a head in Mexico.
1867	Purchase of Alaska.
1871	Treaty of Washington with Britain.
1890	Bureau of Census declares the end of the frontier; Mahan's <i>Influence of Sea Power upon History</i> published.
1893	Hawaiian revolution; depression of 1893.
1895	Venezuelan crisis and Olney Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine.
1898–1899	War with Spain and acquisition of Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Guam, the Philippines, and Samoa.

1899–1900	Open Door Notes.
1901	Platt Amendment for Cuba.
1903	Panamanian revolution and Panama Canal Treaty.
1904–1905	Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine.
1913–1916	Military interventions in Mexican revolution.
1914	World War I begins.
1915	<i>Lusitania</i> crisis.
1917	U.S. entry into World War I.
1918–1920	End of World War I; Paris Peace Conference; Senate rejection of the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations Covenant.
1921–1922	Washington Naval Conference and Four-, Five-, and Nine-Power Treaties.
1924–1925	Dawes Plan and Locarno Treaties.
1928	Kellogg-Briand Pact.
1930	London Naval Conference and Treaty.
1931–1932	Japanese seizure of Manchuria and creation of Manchukuo.
1933	Japan quits the League of Nations; Hitler takes power in Germany; United States officially recognizes the U.S.S.R.
1935–1939	Axis aggression in Asia and Europe; U.S. Neutrality Acts; World War II begins in Europe.
1940	Germany conquers Western Europe; Axis Tripartite Pact.
1941	Lend-Lease Act; Germany invades U.S.S.R.; Atlantic Charter; undeclared naval war in the Atlantic; Pearl Harbor attacked; United States enters World War II.
1942–1943	Declaration by United Nations; second front controversy; unconditional surrender policy developed; Tehran Conference.
1945	Yalta Conference; death of FDR; German surrender; Potsdam Conference; atom bomb attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki; Japanese surrender.
1946	Kennan’s “Long Telegram”; Churchill’s “Iron Curtain” speech.
1947	Truman Doctrine; Marshall Plan; containment policy developed.
1948–1949	Berlin blockade; formation of West Germany and NATO; Soviet Union tests its first nuclear weapon; Communist victory in China.
1950–1951	NSC-68; Korean War begins; Truman-MacArthur controversy.
1953–1954	CIA overthrow of Mosaddeq in Iran and Arbenz in Guatemala; Geneva Conference on Indochina; formation of SEATO.
1955	Diem takes power in South Vietnam.
1956	Suez crisis.
1957–1959	Eisenhower Doctrine; Lebanon intervention; Castro takes power in Cuba; U-2 Affair.
1961	Bay of Pigs invasion; Berlin Wall constructed.
1962	Cuban Missile Crisis.
1963	Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty; Diem and Kennedy assassinations.
1964	Tonkin Gulf episode and resolution.
1965	Major expansion of U.S. military commitment in Vietnam; military intervention in the Dominican Republic.

1966	Fulbright hearings begin.
1967	Arab-Israeli Six-Day War.
1968	Tet Offensive; Johnson's call for peace talks and announcement that he will not seek reelection.
1969	Nixon Doctrine.
1972	Nixon visits to China and Moscow; SALT I; Berlin/German Accords.
1973	Paris Peace Accords on Vietnam; overthrow of Allende in Chile; Yom Kippur War and oil crisis.
1974	Watergate crisis and Nixon resignation; Vladivostok summit.
1975	Helsinki Accords; Communist victory in Vietnam.
1977	Panama Canal Treaties.
1978–1979	Camp David Accords and Egypt-Israel peace treaty; Iranian Revolution and hostage crisis; second oil shock; Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.
1980	Carter Doctrine.
1981–1985	Reagan Doctrine; military buildup and interventions in Central America, the Caribbean, and the Middle East; new Soviet-American conflicts.
1985–1988	Gorbachev takes power in the U.S.S.R. and announces <i>glasnost</i> and <i>perestroika</i> ; Geneva, Iceland, and Moscow summits; INF Treaty.
1989–1991	End of the Soviet Empire in Eastern Europe; START I; Panama invasion; German reunification; Soviet Union collapses; first Iraq war.

Glossary

agrarianism: According to this philosophy, American liberty and representative government are best maintained by a rural society of independent small farmers. This belief is usually associated with Thomas Jefferson and his followers and played a major role in American territorial expansion.

balance of power: A method of preserving peace by having nations so balanced against each other that each is afraid to start a war for fear of losing. The numerous failures of this approach, especially in 1914, led to support for collective security as an alternative approach.

Bolshevism: This radical Marxist ideology, which called for the violent overthrow of all capitalist governments, triumphed in Russia during World War I and resulted in the creation of the Soviet Union.

brinksmanship: A term used to describe and criticize the aggressive anti-Soviet foreign policy and “massive retaliation” defense policy based on nuclear weapons during the Eisenhower presidency. This combination meant that numerous Cold War crises during these years would go to the brink of nuclear war.

“cash and carry”: In an effort to avoid entry into another war, Congress, in the Neutrality Acts of the 1930s, banned U.S. ships from carrying goods and U.S. citizens from providing loans to belligerent powers. Those powers could purchase U.S. goods only if they paid for them directly and carried them away in their own ships.

collective security: As championed by Woodrow Wilson and embedded in the League of Nations Covenant, as well as the later U.N. Charter, this concept sought to replace the balance of power as a peacekeeping device with a legal framework for collective international action against any aggressor nation.

containment: The U.S. policy to contain Soviet and communist expansion throughout the Cold War. Authored by George F. Kennan in 1947, the policy took different forms in different administrations, many of which Kennan himself opposed.

continentalism: The early and mid-19th-century U.S. policy to expand across the entire North American continent.

contraband: Technically defined as anything prohibited by law from being imported or exported, this term usually refers to instruments of war that are liable, according to international law, to seizure by belligerent powers from neutral ships. The United States tended to define contraband in narrow terms (i.e., guns and munitions), whereas the British defined contraband in much broader terms (food and clothing), leading to numerous conflicts between the two nations during the years 1793–1812 and 1914–1917, as well as a war in 1812.

détente: A lessening of tensions between belligerent powers that was used (and misunderstood by many) to explain Soviet-American relations in the Nixon-Ford-Kissinger era.

doctrine of the two spheres: A belief that the Eastern and Western hemispheres constituted two distinct geographic units and that states of war and peace did not necessarily apply to both spheres at the same time.

“dollar diplomacy”: A term usually associated with President William Howard Taft but also used by his successors and his predecessor, Theodore Roosevelt. This policy sought to use American financial and economic power to obtain desired political results in other nations. It was first used in Central America and the Caribbean.

entente: Informal understanding between two or more nations.

“Europe first”: The global strategy of the United States and its World War II allies to concentrate on the defeat of Germany before Japan and, therefore, on offensive operations in the European theater, while maintaining the strategic defensive in Asia and the Pacific. It was the basic U.S. and Allied strategy during the war but was violated in practice. The doctrinal primacy of Europe over Asia continued during the Cold War, as did the violations in practice.

fascism: A highly militaristic 20th-century ideology that triumphed in Germany, Italy, Japan, and numerous other countries; fascism is considered a major cause of the Second World War.

Federalism: A division of power between the state and national governments instituted under the new Constitution in 1789.

“flexible response”: The new U.S. defense policy instituted in the Kennedy administration that rejected Eisenhower’s reliance primarily on nuclear weapons and focused on a buildup of conventional and counterinsurgency forces.

“free ships make free goods”: This U.S. position on neutral rights maintained that a neutral ship could carry non-contraband goods of a belligerent power without being subject to seizure.

free trade: A strong belief throughout U.S. history that trade should be conducted without tariff barriers and that it could serve as an alternative to war.

idealism: A belief that international relations can and should be conducted on the basis of moral and legal principles instead of raw power.

impressment: The practice of forcibly drafting individuals into military service. Practiced extensively by the British navy during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the resulting seizure of sailors from U.S. ships was a major cause of the War of 1812.

“informal empire”: This domination of one nation or people over another without the formal acquisition of colonies was a hallmark of U.S. foreign policy after the Spanish-American War.

isolationism: Although this term has traditionally been used to describe American policy before World War II vis-à-vis the rest of the world, numerous historians have challenged its validity save in regard to formal alliances with European powers.

League of Nations: The international body based on the principle of collective security that was championed by Woodrow Wilson and created in the Treaty of Versailles but rejected by the U.S. Senate in 1919–1920.

lend-lease: The U.S. policy from early 1941 through 1945 to provide, first, Britain, then the Soviet Union and other nations fighting the Axis Powers with war material free of charge.

Manifest Destiny: A term coined by New York newspaper editor John O’Sullivan in 1839, Manifest Destiny refers to the belief that the United States is a special, covenanted nation, destined by God’s will to expand over the entire North American continent and become the greatest country in human history.

Marshall Plan: Officially labeled the European Recovery Program, this major and highly successful U.S. policy during the early years of the Cold War provided West European nations with massive aid to rebuild their war-shattered economies in an integrated manner.

“massive retaliation”: A popular description of the defense policy of the Eisenhower administration that, rejecting the deficit spending of its predecessor, relied upon relatively inexpensive nuclear weapons over conventional forces.

mission concept: This belief in a unique American mission to remake the world in its own image has been a strong component of U.S. foreign policies since the colonial era, though Americans have often disagreed sharply about whether it should be done by force or by example.

Monroe Doctrine: Delivered as part of the president’s annual message to Congress in December of 1823, this famous document asserted that the Western and Eastern hemispheres constituted two distinct political systems, as well as distinct geographical entities, and that the former was no longer open to European colonization or intervention. It was largely the work of John Quincy Adams, resulting from an earlier British offer for a joint statement and, for many years, was enforced by the British fleet. Later corollaries made it a tool for American domination of the Western Hemisphere.

most favored nation: A clause in many U.S. trade treaties whereby any future benefits in tariff rates granted by either signatory to a third party would automatically accrue to the other signatory.

no transfer: A principle usually associated with the Monroe Doctrine but actually asserted both before and after. This U.S. policy opposed the transfer of any colony in the Western Hemisphere from one European power to another.

NSC-68: An early-1950 National Security Council Paper that called for a new defense policy based on a major military buildup of the United States and its allies, no matter what the financial cost, in order to counter what was labeled a global and monolithic communist threat. Written primarily by Paul Nitze in the aftermath of Soviet detonation of an atomic device, it became a reality as a result of the Korean War.

Open Door: Formally enunciated in the Open Door Notes of 1899 and 1900, this U.S. policy called for equal trade opportunities in China, along with preservation of the territorial and administrative integrity of that nation.

perestroika and glasnost: This attempted restructuring and liberalization of the Soviet economic and political systems by Mikhail Gorbachev during the 1980s was a major factor in the warming of Soviet-American relations and the ensuing end to the Cold War.

protectorate: A term used to describe a nominally independent nation that is actually controlled by another power. The United States had five protectorates in Central America and the Caribbean as part of the informal empire it created in the early 20th century.

rapprochement: A warming of relations between powers that goes beyond the lessening of tensions involved in détente.

realism: A belief that international relations are and will continue to be based on considerations of power rather than legal and moral principles.

republicanism: This belief in representative government was the central ideology in the formation of the United States, and a desire to spread it to other nations has long been a key component of U.S. foreign policy.

right of deposit: The right to deposit produce brought down the Mississippi River at Spanish-controlled New Orleans so that it could be reloaded onto oceangoing vessels. This right, critical to western farmers, was obtained in Pinckney's Treaty of 1795 and threatened by Spain's cession of Louisiana to France in 1800.

Romanticism: This early 19th-century worldview replaced the rationalism and universalism of the 18th-century Enlightenment with an emphasis on emotion and particularism. It played a major role in the ensuing development of "scientific" racism and other key components of 19th-century American expansionism.

"scientific" racism: This 19th- and early 20th-century belief in the inherent superiority and inferiority of specific races based on pseudo-scientific "evidence" played a major role in the dispossession and forced removal of Native American tribes; the acquisition of Texas, California, and New Mexico from Mexico via war; and the southern defense of slavery before the Civil War. It played an equally important role in the later segregation and disenfranchisement of blacks, U.S. immigration restrictions, and the genocidal policies of Nazi Germany.

Second Great Awakening: This major evangelical religious revival in the early 19th century had a profound impact on numerous aspects of American life, including foreign policy. Its belief in universal salvation, societal perfectibility, and the United States as God's chosen nation fueled an aggressive territorial expansion, along with overseas expansion via missionary activity in Asia and the Pacific.

second-front controversy: This major conflict in the World War II grand alliance over how to defeat Nazi Germany pitted the British peripheral approach in the Mediterranean against Soviet and American insistence on cross-channel operations. It resulted in the Anglo-American invasions of North Africa, Sicily, and Italy in 1942–1943; the ensuing delay of cross-channel operations until 1944; and much bitterness within the alliance.

Truman Doctrine: In a 1947 request to Congress for aid to the Greek government in its struggle against Communist guerrillas and a Turkish government facing Soviet pressure, President Truman asserted this key Cold War policy of supporting "free peoples" who were "resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."

unilateralism: Seen by many historians as a more accurate description than isolationism of traditional U.S. policy toward other nations, unilateralism describes an American desire and tendency to act on its own in the world, without the encumbrances of alliances.

United Nations: This international body, based on the principle of collective security, was created at the end of World War II to replace the League of Nations.

Wilsonianism: A term referring to the foreign policies of Woodrow Wilson that is often used to describe U.S. efforts to promote collective security, to spread democracy to other nations, or to re-create the world in the American image.

Biographical Notes

Acheson, Dean (1893–1971): Undersecretary of state and secretary of state during the Truman administration. He was important in the creation and implementation of major U.S. policies during the early years of the Cold War and the Korean conflict and was a primary target of Republicans for his haughtiness, as well as his policies.

Adams, John (1735–1826): As second president of the United States, Adams's willingness to end the undeclared naval war with France was an extraordinary act of political courage that may have saved the nation from civil war but split his Federalist Party and led to his defeat for reelection in 1800.

Adams, John Quincy (1767–1848): Considered by many historians to have been America's greatest secretary of state, Adams's accomplishments included engineering the rapprochement with Great Britain that followed the War of 1812, acquiring Florida from Spain, securing a U.S. claim to Oregon, and authoring the Monroe Doctrine.

Bryan, William Jennings (1860–1925): In addition to his three unsuccessful presidential bids, this major political figure served as Woodrow Wilson's secretary of state from 1913–1915. He disagreed with Wilson's neutrality policies, resigned in protest, and was replaced by Robert Lansing.

Dulles, John Foster (1888–1959): Secretary of state under Eisenhower who appeared to be running U.S. foreign policy and whose excessive moralism and ideological rigidity alienated many.

Fulbright, J. William (1905–1995): As chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee during the 1960s, Fulbright became a major critic of the Vietnam War and what he labeled America's "arrogance of power."

Hamilton, Alexander (1755–1804): The first secretary of the treasury and a major adviser to George Washington, Hamilton played a pivotal role in the creation and implementation of a pro-British foreign policy, as well as U.S. fiscal and military policies during the 1790s.

Hay, John (1838–1905): Secretary of state who issued the famous Open Door Notes in 1899 and 1900, asserting U.S. support for equal trade opportunities in China and the preservation of that country's territorial and administrative integrity.

Hoover, Herbert (1874–1964): Before his failed presidency of 1929–1933, Hoover played a major role as secretary of commerce from 1921–1928 in the expansion of American trade and influence that undergirded the prosperity and peace of the 1920s.

Hughes, Charles Evans (1862–1948): Narrowly defeated by Woodrow Wilson in the 1916 presidential campaign, Hughes became secretary of state during the ensuing Harding administration and was primarily responsible for the successful naval arms limitation conference in Washington that resulted in the Four-, Five-, and Nine-Power Treaties and helped to ensure a decade of peace in Asia and the Pacific.

Jay, John (1745–1829): A major diplomatic figure in early American history, as well as one of the three authors of the famous Federalist papers and chief justice of the Supreme Court. He served as a representative to Spain and a peace negotiator during the Revolutionary War, secretary of foreign affairs under the Articles of Confederation, and negotiator of the 1794 treaty with Britain that bears his name.

Jefferson, Thomas (1743–1826): Although he is best known as the author of the Declaration of Independence and third president of the United States, Jefferson was also the nation's first secretary of state and the key opponent of Hamilton's foreign and domestic policies. As president, his Louisiana Purchase more than doubled the size of the United States.

Kennan, George F. (1904–2005): A career foreign service officer and Russian specialist who headed the State Department's Policy Planning staff from 1947–1950 and served as ambassador to the U.S.S.R. and Yugoslavia. Kennan authored the famous "Long Telegram" and containment policy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union before becoming a scholar and major critic of the Cold War policies he had helped to initiate.

Kissinger, Henry A. (b. 1923): A Harvard political scientist who became national security adviser and secretary of state during the Nixon-Ford presidencies, Kissinger played a key role in the major reorientation of U.S. foreign policy that occurred from 1969–1976. He is generally considered one of the most important and controversial figures in the history of American foreign policy.

Lodge, Henry Cabot (1850–1924): Republican senator from Massachusetts and friend of Theodore Roosevelt who strongly supported U.S. overseas imperialism during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he led the successful fight against Senate ratification of Woodrow Wilson's Treaty of Versailles and League of Nations Covenant.

Madison, James (1751–1836): Although far less famous than his colleague Jefferson, Madison is considered the father of the Constitution and co-founder of the Democratic-Republican Party that opposed Hamilton’s policies. He served as secretary of state under Jefferson from 1801–1809 and as president from 1809–1817.

Mahan, Alfred Thayer (1840–1914): Probably the most famous naval theoretician of all time, Mahan, in his prominent 1890 work, *Influence of Sea Power upon History*, and other writings, argued that the oceans were highways rather than defensive moats and that sea power was the key to national greatness. His ideas played a major role in the creation of the modern U.S. Navy, the acquisition of a colonial empire in the Caribbean and Pacific, and the building of a canal through Central America.

Marshall, George C. (1880–1959): One of the most important and respected individuals in the 1940s, Marshall served as army chief of staff from 1939–1945, special presidential envoy to China immediately thereafter, secretary of state from 1947–1949, and secretary of defense from 1950–1951. In these roles, he was a major figure in the creation of America’s awesome military power and Allied victory during World War II and the development and success of early U.S. Cold War policies, most notably, the Marshall Plan for European economic recovery that bears his name and for which he won the Nobel Peace Prize.

McNamara, Robert (b. 1916): Controversial secretary of defense under Kennedy and Johnson from 1963–1967, McNamara was one of the chief architects of U.S. national security policies during his tenure and supported the major military commitment to Vietnam that occurred during those years.

Olney, Richard (1835–1917): Secretary of state during the Venezuelan crisis of 1895 and author of the famous Olney Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, asserting a U.S. right to arbitrate disputes between European and Latin American nations.

O’Sullivan, John (1813–1895): New York newspaper editor who coined the phrase “Manifest Destiny” in 1839.

Polk, James K. (1795–1849): As president from 1845–1849, Polk was responsible for the acquisition of Oregon peacefully and of California and New Mexico through war. Polk is one of the least known but most important presidents in the history of American continental expansion. He is also one of the most controversial, rated as near great by some historians but attacked by others for initiating an unnecessary war of aggression that led directly to the Civil War and for a dangerous expansion of presidential war-making powers.

Seward, William Henry (1801–1872): A former New York governor and senator, Seward served as secretary of state from 1861–1869. He is best known for his diplomacy during the Civil War, which succeeded in preventing European intervention on the side of the South, but he is equally important for his postwar acquisition of Alaska from Russia and for his expansionist vision of a global American empire.

Tecumseh (1768–1813): Shawnee diplomat and warrior who created and led a major confederation of Native American tribes along the frontier in an effort to halt further white expansion in the early 19th century. The effort at first succeeded but eventually led to the War of 1812, during which Tecumseh was killed.

Tracy, Benjamin F. (1830–1915): Secretary of the navy in the Harrison presidency of 1889–1893, Tracy is considered the father of the modern U.S. Navy.

Trist, Nicholas P. (1800–1874): Chief clerk of the State Department who violated presidential orders in 1847–1848 to negotiate the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo that ended the war with Mexico and gained California and New Mexico for the United States.

Turner, Frederick Jackson (1861–1932): Famous U.S. historian whose “frontier thesis” of 1893 is often viewed as a key primary source for understanding U.S. overseas imperialism and a major secondary interpretation of American history.

Tyler, John (1790–1862): The first vice president to assume the presidency upon the death of an incumbent (in this case, William Henry Harrison), Tyler extended the Monroe Doctrine to Hawaii and pressed for the annexation of the Republic of Texas. He achieved this goal just a few days before he left office through a joint resolution that required only majority votes instead of a treaty that would have required a two-thirds Senate vote.

Walker, William (1824–1860): Known as the “grey-eyed man of destiny,” Walker was one of the most famous filibusters—individuals who forcibly attempted to create personal empires in Central America and the Caribbean during the time between the war with Mexico and the Civil War. At one point, Walker succeeded in gaining control over Nicaragua and recognition from Washington, but he was eventually overthrown and killed.

Webster, Daniel (1782–1852): Famous Massachusetts congressman and senator who served as secretary of state from 1841–1843 and again from 1850–1852. On both occasions, he played a major role in American commercial expansion into the Pacific and Far East.

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U.S. Department of State. *Foreign Relations of the United States*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1861–. This ongoing series, now numbering hundreds of volumes, constitutes the most comprehensive and important published source for official U.S. foreign policy documents.

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Notes